

Israel to free 3 Jordanian prisoners before year-end

Release of rest will take time — Muasher

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Three Jordanians serving jail sentences in Israel are expected to be freed before the end of this year but securing the release of the rest — said to be 18 — would take some time. Information Minister Marwan Muasher said Monday.

The comment came amid reports from Israel that Jordanian prisoners at Ashkelon jail were threatening to go on hunger-strike to protest their detention conditions and demand their release.

Dr. Muasher, addressing a weekly press briefing, also noted that Israeli President Ezer Weizman had promised, during a visit to Jordan this month, that he would look into the cases of Jordanian prisoners in Israel. But, the minister pointed out, the Israeli president did not have sweeping authority to offer amnesty to every prisoner.

The minister told the briefing that the Jordanian ambassador to Israel, Omar Rifai, had informed the government that Israel had agreed to free three Jordanian prisoners before the end of the year. That would raise to nearly 20 the total number of Jordanians released by Israel following the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in October 1994.

"Securing the release of the rest is going to be a lengthy process because all of them are convicted of killing Israeli civilians or soldiers," said Dr. Muasher.

The Israeli military has the final say in releasing prisoners serving sentences on murder charges, and it has consistently followed a lengthy procedure before recommending to the government that any murder convict be freed.

That posture is one of the key hurdles cited by Israeli government officials for the delays in freeing many of the thousands of Palestinians held in Israeli jails as part of the autonomy agreements.

The Israeli president can order the release of prisoners under special pardons offered by himself, but this does not apply to "crimes that involve blood."

President Weizman told a press conference during his visit to Jordan this month that he would study the issue of Jordanian

prisoners closely but did not make a specific pledge that they would be released.

Referring to Mr. Weizman's comments, Dr. Muasher, who served as ambassador to Israel before becoming minister of information early this year, noted: "The Israeli president does not have sweeping authority to offer amnesty to any prisoner. His authority applies only to certain cases."

Meanwhile, an appeal was issued on behalf of the families of Jordanian prisoners in Israel to petition His Majesty King Hussein to personally intervene to secure the release of the prisoners.

The handwritten appeal, distributed to journalists attending Monday's press briefing by Dr. Muasher, said the Jordanian prisoners in Israel were suffering from "psychological as well as health problems," and, as such, it was imperative that they be released.

The appeal was signed by Saeed Nimer Makahel "on behalf of the families of Jordanian prisoners in Israel."

Meanwhile, the Arabic-language Al Ra'i reported that a delegation representing the Society of Friends of Prisoners based in Nazareth had visited Ashkelon jail and met with Jordanian and Lebanese held there.

"They found that the situation in the prison was very bad in terms of food nature of confinement," the paper said, adding that the Israeli authorities were frequently shifting the prisoners around.

"The prisoners said that they would go on hunger-strike if they were not freed, and they appealed to the government of Jordan through the delegation which is expected to visit the Jordanian embassy in Tel Aviv to exert efforts on their behalf," the report said.

The delegation received a list of 11 Jordanian prisoners in Ashkelon and five in Naffah prison, the report said.

In a press release, the society sent an appeal to the Jordanian government and ambassador in Israel to pay a visit to the prisoners and listen their grievances.

The society also sent a memo to the International Committee of the Red Cross and other human rights organisations requesting their intervention on behalf of the prisoners.



QATARI MINISTER VISITS GAZA: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat speaks with the Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Al Thani in Gaza on Monday. The Qatari minister reiterated during his first visit to the Palestinian autonomous enclave that his country would continue to freeze normalisation of ties with Israel unless peace talks moved forward (see page 1) (Reuters photo)

Flashfloods hit Egypt; 7 killed

CAIRO (AP) — Torrential rains hit southern Egypt for the sixth straight day Monday flooding thousands of acres of land, destroying scores of houses and leaving at least seven people dead.

Police officials said the main highways to southern Egypt have been damaged by flash floods unleashed by the rains.

On Sunday night, four members of a family were electrocuted when an electricity line fell on their home near Mansout.

A 10-year-old girl died in Minya when she was crushed by a palm tree toppled by the flooding. A woman in neighbouring Assiut was electrocuted, and another woman in

Sohag died of a heart attack when flash floods struck her village.

The four cities are 240 to 400 kilometres south of Cairo.

The rains destroyed scores of houses made of mud bricks, which disintegrated in the flooding. In Mallawi 260 kilometres south of Cairo, 260 houses were sitting in water, and rescue teams were trying to evacuate their inhabitants.

Police said thousands of acres of agricultural land also are under water.

The rains and floods have caused extensive damage over the past few days to electricity and telephone lines in southern Egypt. Another casualty came over the weekend when a man

was electrocuted in the tourist resort of Hurgada on the Red Sea.

Stormy weather Thursday caused a tourist Nile River cruiser to capsize. Of the 128 foreign tourists and Egyptians abroad, 14 died and six others were missing and feared dead.

The bodies of five Egyptians and an unidentified woman were the latest to be recovered on Sunday.

Frogmen had earlier retrieved the bodies of eight other people, since the accident on Thursday. They were identified as Czech, Slovak and Polish tourists, reports said. Rescuers were continuing their efforts to find six people still left in the Nile — five tourists and an Egyptian.

Probe opens in suspect's killing in Lebanon; press suggests cover-up

BEIRUT (AP) — Amid press suggestions of a cover-up, investigators Monday heard testimony from government security agents who killed a suspect in the alleged embezzlement of millions of dollars from the Finance Ministry.

Farid Moussali, a 38-year-old Palestinian, was shot to death by agents who raided a hideout in the mountain village of Ashqout early Sunday.

The raiding party started shooting after it came under fire from Moussali, who was alone, a department statement said.

The embezzlement case underlined the corruption which has plagued the Lebanese civil service for decades and angered ordinary Lebanese burdened with rising taxes and duties imposed by the Finance Ministry.

Moussali had been in hiding since accusations surfaced in August that he and Finance Ministry Treasurer Raafat Suleiman collaborated in a scam to pass forged tax stamps through the ministry's

bureaucracy and pocket the moneys.

Moussali's death may have eliminated a main lead for investigators, court officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

Both the left-leaning daily Al Safir and the conservative Al Diyar newspaper questioned the circumstances surrounding Moussali's death.

"We have to ask more additional questions about the possibility of arresting Farid Moussali without killing him, especially since he possessed extremely important information which could have uncovered in full the ambiguities around Raafat Suleiman," Al Diyar said.

Al Safir quoted residents near where Moussali was killed as saying they doubted he was killed in a gun battle since they did not hear a lot of shooting.

Moussali died from bullet wounds in the chest, mouth and eye. A coroner said the man was shot from a distance of more than 30 centimetres but could not ascertain from exactly how far away the fatal

bullets were fired.

Military Prosecutor General Joseph Madaani interrogated seven members of the security forces and the owner of the building where the suspect had been hiding.

Mr. Madaani said the interrogation was routine and no person was being held in the shooting. The questioning lasted from Sunday night into the early hours Monday.

The other suspect, Suleiman, has been missing since the scandal was uncovered. Authorities say he is a wanted fugitive. His family said Sunday he was being held prisoner, but did not say who was holding him.

The embezzled money was estimated at first at 43 billion pounds (\$26 million), then it was dropped to 15 billion pounds (about \$10 million), State Minister for Finance Fadi Sanjari said Friday that the money amounted to only 4 billion pounds (\$2.5 million).

The Finance Ministry is headed by Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, but running it is delegated to Mr. Sanjari.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Arafat to attend donors' meeting

PARIS (R) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat will attend a donors' meeting in Paris of the World Bank's consultative group on the West Bank and Gaza on Wednesday, the bank said on Monday. The meeting is a pledging session for World Bank programmes in the autonomous Palestinian areas for 1997. Kemal Dervis, World Bank vice-president for the Middle East and North Africa, told reporters. Mr. Arafat will be accompanied by Nabil Shaath and Mohammad Nashashibi who are among his main advisers for economic and financial issues.

Five killed, 10 injured in Yemeni fight

SANAA (AP) — Five people were killed and 10 injured on Sunday when fighting broke out between tribesmen over a water canal claimed by two tribes, security sources said. They said army and security forces backed by tanks and armoured personnel carriers were headed for the area of the fighting in the province of Labj, some 100 kilometres north of the port city of Aden, to try and resolve the dispute. Yemen, an impoverished and largely tribal country of some 17 million people in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, is often beset by tribal conflicts. Weapons, including heavy machine guns, rocket launchers and artillery, are not difficult to buy in Yemen, where some parts are outside the influence of the central government in Sanaa, the capital.

Rabin assassin asks for computer

BEER SHEVA (AFP) — Yigal Amir, the assassin of the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, asked a court on Sunday for a computer to write his memoirs and continue his law studies, officials said. The right-wing extremist, who has been sentenced to life in prison for shooting Rabin at a peace rally last year, also asked that he be moved to a prison closer to his home in Tel Aviv to facilitate visits from his lawyers and family. He also appealed to the court that the surveillance camera he removed from his high-security, solitary cell in the Beer Sheva prison in southern Israel, Amir said he was continuing his law studies through the mail. He was convicted in March of shooting Rabin at point blank range on Nov. 4, 1995, during a peace rally in Tel Aviv. He admitted the shooting.

Turkey seizes heroin worth \$41 million

ANKARA (R) — Turkish security forces have seized heroin worth more than \$40 million in two drug raids and one consignment was found in dried dung, the state-run Anatolian news agency said on Monday. Five people were detained in connection with the seizure of 195 kilograms of the drug, estimated to be worth three trillion Turkish lira (\$30 million), from a house in southeastern Hakkari province on Sunday. Gendarmes raided the house in Yuksekova after a tip-off and found the heroin hidden in dried dung, the agency said. It said the seized drugs were to be taken to the eastern province of Van. In Van, a further 74 kilograms of heroin worth \$11.4 million was seized. Turkey is a major transit point for heroin brought in from Asia for shipment to Western Europe. In 1995, Turkish security forces seized 3.4 tonnes of heroin, more than fifth of the worldwide haul.

Morocco arrests rebels fleeing Algeria

RABAT (R) — Moroccan security forces have killed an Algerian guerrilla and arrested other rebels apparently trying to sneak into Morocco to escape Algerian forces, a Moroccan newspaper said on Monday. Al Itihad Al Ishiraki newspaper said one Algerian guerrilla was killed, after he refused to surrender to Moroccan security forces. "The armed men were held by the royal gendarmes in the eastern town of Jerada," said the newspaper quoting what it called reliable sources. In Algeria, the leading newspaper Al Watan said on Monday "armed terrorist groups have infiltrated into Algeria through its border with Morocco." The Algerian government has been battling guerrillas since early 1992 when the authorities cancelled a general election in which radical Islamists had taken a commanding lead. Around 60,000 people have been killed in Algeria's violence since then. Morocco in 1993 arrested the leader of the feared Armed Islamic Group (GIA), Abdul Haq Liada, and handed him over to Algeria where he was sentenced to death by an Algiers court.

Qatar to get new constitution

DOHA (AP) — Qatar will get a new constitution to incorporate recent changes in the country's laws, the ruler of the emirate said Monday.

Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani made the announcement at the opening session of his newly expanded advisory council. The panel, increased from 30 to 35 members, has no legislative responsibilities but is allowed to make recommendations to the appointed government.

Sheikh Hamad took power after ousting his father, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani, in a bloodless coup in June 1995. Since then, he has announced political and economic reforms.

Qatar, a country of 200,000 citizens on the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula has had a provisional constitution since it gained independence 25 years ago. Analysts suggest

that Sheikh Hamad's call for a permanent document would help him consolidate power by incorporating changes into the country's laws. Last month, the emir named the third of his four sons to be crown prince after passing a decree that permits any of his sons to succeed him, not just the eldest. He has also appointed his younger half-brother prime minister, giving up a position that had always been held by the emir himself.

Sheikh Hamad also has taken steps to invigorate its private sector and promote foreign investment, including formation of an industrial development bank and a stock exchange.

Qatar has rich energy resources, including the third-largest natural gas reserves in the world. But Sheikh Hamad said finding financing for major projects remains a problem.

4 drug traffickers hanged in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Four members of an international drug ring have been hanged in northern Iran after being caught with one tonne of opium and 12 kilograms of morphine, a newspaper reported Monday.

The four Iranians, including ringleader Mohammad Shahraki, were hanged after being convicted by a revolutionary court in Sari, the main town in Mazandaran province, the Kayhan newspaper said, without giving the date of their execution or arrest.

The cases of six other gang members are still under investigation, it added. They brought the narcotics from Pakistan and distributed them in Iran and several other countries, the paper said.

Iran is a transit route for drugs from Pakistan and Afghanistan destined for Europe.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:05Budgie
14:25Oscar's Orchestra
14:40Comedy — I Love Lucy
15:00Sciences Cartoon
15:15Magazine — Montagne
15:30At The Zoo
16:30My Secret Identity
17:00News Flash
17:01Fun With Physics
17:15Road To Avonlea
18:00 Serie — La Lumiere des Justes
19:00Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Extra Large
19:30News Headlines
19:35Murphy Brown
20:00Magazine — Zero One
20:30Encounter
21:10Star Trek
22:00News in English
22:25China Beach
23:15Mission Impossible
23:59Are You Being Served?

PRAYER TIMES

04:42Fajr
06:03(Sunrise) Duha
11:21Dhuhr
14:14Asr
16:39Maghreb
17:59Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweith, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785.

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel.
661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel.
622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652326.

Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel.
771751.

Arman International Church
Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 634328.

German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.

The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Under the effect of the unstable moist air mass currently affecting the Kingdom, skies will be

cloudy to partly cloudy, winds

southeasterly moderate to active,

with a chance of rainfall at intervals,

in Aqaba, winds will be

southerly moderate and seas

rough.

Amman12/17

Aqaba17/24

Deserts12/18

Jordan Valley15/23

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 16, Aqaba 24 Humidity

readings: Amman 98 per cent,

Aqaba 58 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Jum'a Abo Dhiab758848

Dr. Yousef Rashid896301

Dr. Walid Al Masri675485

Dr. Khalil Jbali740740

Ferdous pharmacy778336

Al Asema pharmacy637055

Al Salam pharmacy636730

Yacoub pharmacy644945

Shmeisani pharmacy637660

Nabrouk pharmacy623672

Najib pharmacy847652

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Abu Bakr 276852

Al Quds pharmacy1

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halaseh982799

Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre637111

Civil Defence Dept.661111

Civil Defence Immediate Resc-

cue630341

Civil Defence Emergency199

Rescue Police 192, 621111,

637777

Fire Brigade617101

Blood Bank775121

Highway Police843402

Traffic Police896390

Public Security Department

.....630321

Hotel Complaints605800

Price Complaints661176

Water and Sewerage Com-

plaints897467

Amman Municipality Com-

plaints787111

Telephone Information (direc-

tory assistance)121

Overseas Calls010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs

661101

Jordan Television773111

Radio Jordan774111

Water Authority680100

Jordan Electricity Authority

.....815615

Electric Power Company

636381

RJ Flight Information 08-

53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-

53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussien Medical Centre

813813/32

Khalidi Maternity642381/6

Akileh Maternity642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity

.....642362

Mallhas, J. Amman636401

Palestine Shmeisani607071

Shmeisani Hospital609131

University Hospital845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 666126/37

The Islamic Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir775111/26

Army, Marka891611/5

Queen Alia Hospital

602240/50

Amal Hospital674155

The Arab Centre for Heart

and Special Surgery865199

ZARQA:

Japan, France sign 20-point action plan for 21st century

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and French President Jacques Chirac Monday signed a 20-point action plan aimed at boosting bilateral ties into the 21st century.

Mr. Chirac, who arrived here Sunday for a six-day visit, later said that cooperation and dialogue between his country and Japan should help bring about an "indispensable rapprochement" between Europe and Asia.

"Rebalancing the 'great triangle' of growth formed by America, Europe and Asia will come about through strengthening relations between Europe and East Asia," he said in a speech to 900 students and other guests at Keio University.

The Franco-Japanese dialogue will facilitate this indispensable rapprochement," he said.

The agreement signed Monday spells out 20 areas of cooperation for 2000 including a provision that the Japanese and French leaders meet "at least once a year to promote joint activities at the dawn of the new millennium."

"We've become friends," Mr. Hashimoto said during the signing ceremony, explaining that the relationship between Tokyo and Paris would be "one of the most important links between Asian and European countries."

Mr. Chirac said exchanges between the two countries did not reflect the size of their economies. "We are two great economic powers, the second and fourth in the world, but the level of our exchanges is still insufficient," he said.

"Our two nations get on well together and we are getting on better and better," Mr. Chirac said, noting the numerous "common approaches" taken by the two countries at the group of seven summit in Lyons earlier this year.

Mr. Chirac highlighted the areas of development aid along with the commitment of the two countries to exchange-rate stability and their opposition to unilateral measures such as U.S. sanctions against Cuba and Iran.

Under the agreement, foreign ministers of the two countries are to meet at least twice a year while ministers in charge of economics, trade, industry and finance are to meet at least once a year. Officials in charge of the Japanese and French ministries will also hold regular meetings.

Japan and France will also hold regular "two-plus-two" talks from 1997, bringing together Foreign and Defence Ministry officials to discuss the "full range of Franco-Japanese cooperation in the politico-military sphere."

The agreement also encourages more frequent meetings between economic and trade union groups along with business leaders from the two countries.

"France and Japan support the development of trade ties and are committed to holding bilateral talks aimed at removing barriers limiting market access whenever it is necessary," the agreement said.

During talks between the two leaders, Mr. Hashimoto said ties between Tokyo and Paris were "at the heart of the Asia-Europe relationship" and that Monday's agreement was only a "beginning" for the two countries.

Mr. Chirac cited sectors where French exports face barriers in Japan such as apples, beef and aircraft, noting that Japan Airlines Co. Ltd. (JAL) was alone among the world's 10 biggest airlines in not possessing any Airbus aircraft.

Mr. Hashimoto replied that JAL was a private company and that other Japanese airlines used planes made by the European consortium.

During their talks, Mr. Chirac raised the issue of problems faced by French construction companies in the Japanese market.

But the president noted that he had been telling French business leaders that the Japanese market was not only possible but also necessary, praising the narrowing of the trade imbalance between the two countries.

Mr. Chirac also indicated that France Telecom was seeking "important partners" and called for a "greater opening" of the Japanese insurance market.

Earlier, Mr. Chirac and his wife, Bernadette, met Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko at the Akasaka Palace, marking the official start of the French leader's visit, his 43rd to Japan and his first since becoming president.

2 Koreas poised to discuss return of submarine dead

SEOUL (AFP) — North and South Korea Monday appeared poised to ease a tense standoff over an incident by a Northern submarine with the first indirect discussions on the return of the bodies of the crew.

But rival demands for apologies clouded the prospects of ending the standoff that has jeopardised Pyongyang's two-year-long nuclear freeze and U.S. efforts to draw Pyongyang out of its isolation, observers said.

"The North raised the issue on Thursday, and it will be discussed tomorrow (Tuesday)," a United Nations Command (UNC) spokesman here told AFP.

He said U.N. Armistice Commission officers had accepted the North Korean request to discuss the matter Tuesday at a meeting at the truce village of Panmunjom.

Confirmation of the Panmunjom meeting followed the first statement by South Korea that it was willing to discuss repatriation of the bodies, but only if the north apologises first.

"I think repatriation of the bodies should be seen from the side of the bereaved families," the South's Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-Ha said, adding that Pyongyang must admit, apologise and pledge never to repeat

the incident.

An almost simultaneous statement from the North said it wanted to resolve the matter in a peaceful fashion, but it too, demanded an apology.

South Korea has previously flatly rejected the North's demands for repatriation of the bodies; it was the first time the government has agreed to discuss the issue.

The submarine went aground on a South Korean beach on Sept. 18. The crew, believed to number 26, fled ashore sparking a massive hunt by the South Korean military.

Of the 26, one is believed to be still at large, one was captured, 11 were found dead apparently killed by colleagues to prevent their capture, and 13 were killed.

North Korea's mouthpiece Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) in an "authorised statement" demanded the immediate and unconditional return of the bodies, and an apology from South Korea for killing the crew.

"The South Korean authorities must apologise for the killing of our seamen in cold blood and unconditionally send the submarine and the dead bodies back to the north at an early date," KCNA said.

"Our demand was a token

of the North's good intention to keep the incident from leading to increased tension and undesirable developments," the statement said, urging the South to resolve the submarine row "in a peaceful way" and with "prudence."

Neither side mentioned the one captured crew member, who has told South Korean interrogators the submarine was on a spy pickup mission when it ran aground some 100 kilometres south of the DMZ.

North Korea at first remained silent and refused to accept a protest over its intrusion from Armistice Commission officers in the South.

However it later said the submarine had accidentally drifted South with engine trouble and threatened "thousandfold retaliation" if the submarine and the crew were not repatriated.

Seoul, which mobilised thousands of troops to hunt down the commandos and crew, angrily rejected the request.

Later President Kim Young-Sam said that if there was no apology, inter-Korean contacts, including work on two nuclear reactors promised to North Korea under a 1994 agreement with the United States, would be stalled.

Russian blast death toll rises to over 40

MOSCOW (R) — The death toll from the weekend explosion at a military block of flats in Russia's southern Dagestan region rose to more than 40 Monday and could end up at more than 50, Russia's emergency ministry said.

The ministry said the 43 dead from Saturday's blast included 15 children. Eight people were still in hospital and about a dozen were still missing and feared buried in the wreckage.

NTV television said rescuers still believed there was a chance of finding some of them alive and were picking slowly through the rubble for survivors.

ITAR-TASS news agency quoted official sources as saying the blast might have been a gangland revenge attack linked to a regional crackdown on arms and caviar smuggling.

Border guards issued a statement describing the explosion as a "terrorist act" by cross-border criminals.

"Those who thus intend to intimidate the border defenders are deeply mistaken," said the statement, adding that the losses had strengthened the guards' resolve to deal harshly with the criminals.

It called on the relevant state institutions to deal with the "outrageous outburst of crime and terrorism" in the country.

Gangland violence has become commonplace in post-Communist Russia. Earlier this month 14 people died in a bomb blast at a Moscow cemetery apparently triggered by a feud between warring factions of an Afghan war veterans' charity with big business links.

Regional authorities declared Sunday and Monday official days of mourning in Dagestan, which borders the breakaway Russian republic of Chechnya.

Some officials said there might be a link between the explosion and Chechnya, where an uneasy peace is holding after a 21-month bloody conflict between Russian forces and separatists.

But Chechen rebel leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, whose aide worked out a new draft agreement with Moscow Saturday, denied the separatists were involved in the blast, which he said was aimed at wrecking the peace process.



Thousands of Romanians celebrate exit poll results showing opposition leader Emil Constantinescu ahead of incumbent Ion Iliescu by eight per cent Monday (Reuters photo)

Romania's president-elect pledges swift reform

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania's president-elect Emil Constantinescu, suovour a historic triumph over ex-Communists who held the country in an iron grip, said Monday he would move swiftly to begin a new era of reform.

Mr. Constantinescu won Sunday's election by a surprisingly large margin, defeating Ion Iliescu who led the East European country since its bloody upheaval in 1989, and until recently was favourite to win again.

Exit polls gave Mr. Constantinescu a seven or eight point margin over Mr. Iliescu, an ex-Communist reviled by liberals as the man who hobbled real reforms after coming to power in the aftermath of Stalinist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu's overthrow and execution.

Throughout the night revolutionaries embraced, cracked open champagne and swayed to disco music in the square as they celebrated the end of the old order.

As the initial euphoria died away, Mr. Constantinescu told Romanians to brace themselves for the pain of reviving a weak economy that has left most of them in poverty and pledged to begin a reform programme immediately he is inaugurated.

"The time for action has begun. From this moment, we will have to work," he told a television interviewer.

"We will have an austerity programme. We have an extremely difficult legacy. The government must apply long-term reform but must achieve results quickly."

"I am convinced we will be able to make this effort and that we will succeed if

we remove incompetence and theft."

The former geology professor said he would work with his political partners to implement quickly his "contract with Romania", modelled on the U.S. Republican Party programme.

The contract promises improved social benefits, reduced taxation, easier credit for the disadvantaged and better economic management within 200 days of taking power.

Mr. Constantinescu also promised to attack corruption, liberate financial markets and remove barriers to foreign investment that prevented Romania getting the help it needed.

His pro-Western belief in free markets will go down well abroad, and help to improve Romania's poor image as a backward country in the thrall of Ceausescu's successors.

"This time we will have to use with wisdom the new sympathy we are getting, capital we lost in 1989," he said, adding that his victory, coupled with the parliamentary triumph two weeks ago of his centrist group, had won foreign support.

His success ended Romania's status as the sole East European state where former Communists had yet to be dislodged and showed a new political maturity, analysts said.

"It is the first time in Romania's history that a leader is departing in a democratic way," commentator Ion Cristoiu said.

"Not strangled, not in a coup, not shot in Timisoara (Ceausescu's execution). That is why today is a historic day."

Romania's anti-Communist challenger Emil Constantinescu celebrates with his wife Nadia (centre) and daughter Nadina (left) after results of exit polls Monday showed him ahead of incumbent Ion Iliescu (Reuters photo)

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Romania's anti-Communist challenger



Rwandan Hutu refugees pass by a dead Zairean soldier near the camp of Sake. Hundreds of thousands of refugees fled the Mugunga and Sake refugee camps Thursday to return to Rwanda after having been in Zaire for more than two years (Reuter photo)

Hutu refugee flow slows; Zaire force doubts increase

GISENYI, Rwanda (R) — The flow of Hutu refugees crossing into Rwanda from Zaire dropped sharply Monday while a fragile consensus on the need for a multinational peace force splintered.

With an estimated 400,000 refugees already back home and a further 100,000 on the move, several countries called for a rethink on the U.N. mission's goal and size.

Countries set to participate in the Canadian-led force said they would meet Wednesday at the U.S. military's European headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany, to review the situation.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry stressed Sunday that Washington had yet to make a firm decision on participation. At one point during an NBC television interview, he said: "We are not the Salvation Army."

The Stuttgart meeting was announced at the world food summit in Rome by South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki. Like Washington, South Africa had been a reluctant participant in the force, which was set up to help get food to the refugees.

Some 10,000 soldiers are supposed to join the Canadian-led contingent, but Mr.

Mbeki said a force that size might not be needed now and the focus would be different anyway.

"I think one of the urgent questions that remains is that you've got these refugees who might have shifted location and are now in Rwanda and who still need to be fed and clothed," he said.

On Monday, Eritrea joined the chorus of countries saying the force was at best no longer necessary, at worst ill-conceived and said it was withdrawing an earlier commitment to take part.

In a statement faxed to Reuters in Nairobi, the Foreign Ministry said the wishes of regional leaders had been ignored.

"The government of Eritrea wishes to express its serious misgivings on the multinational force of intervention on eastern Zaire that is apparently under way," the statement said.

But Canada, backed by the United Nations, insisted the mission should go ahead.

"Now is not the time to pause and reflect. We still have to have very direct action," Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy told Reuters.

Mr. Axworthy said large numbers of refugees re-

mained in various parts of eastern Zaire. They were weak, tired and hungry and would find it difficult to join the exodus.

Meanwhile in the heart of Africa, refugees woke up on the roads in the eastern Zairean city of Goma, put their belongings on their heads, held firm to their children and started walking at first light.

The first group plodded without pausing past three Rwandan soldiers at the border and crossed into the Rwandan town of Gisenyi.

The soldiers, who had stood guard overnight, abandoned the border post minutes later as the flow of refugees increased.

But at times it dwindled to a thin broken line, compared to the thousands crossing every hour, even in the early morning, on the previous two days.

"The flood is running out. These are the stragglers. It looks like this is the start of the end of this wave," said a U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) worker, watching the slow silent procession.

Ten refugees, including three small children, pushed a pick-up vehicle loaded with mattresses and other belongings up a small hill across the border after it had

Pakistan interim government leads corruption hunt into Bhutto team

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistan's interim government has stepped up pressure on the ousted administration of Benazir Bhutto with the detention of another ex-minister and a top intelligence official.

Nawaz Khokhar, science and technology minister in the sacked government, was taken into custody in the eastern provincial capital of Lahore late Sunday, officials said.

Mr. Khokhar, the second Bhutto minister to be detained since she was ousted on Nov. 5, was picked up by the Federal Investigation Agency, which looks into criminal cases.

The reasons for Mr. Khokhar's detention were not immediately known however.

Ms. Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari, who was also her investment minister, was detained the day President Farooq Ahmad Leghari dismissed the prime minister, accusing her of corruption and presiding over a deadly misrule.

In his proclamation sacking Ms. Bhutto, the president had mentioned Mr. Khokhar's appointment, say-

Taiwan party drafts peace pact with China

TAIPEI (AFP) — Taiwan's ruling Kuomintang (KMT, or Nationalist Party) Monday released a draft peace treaty with mainland China, and called for the swapping of representative offices between the two rivals.

The draft peace treaty was prepared by the director of the Diplomacy Department at Taiwan's National Chengchi University at the request of the ruling party's Policy Coordination Committee.

The paper, released through the state-funded Central News Agency (CNA), argues that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait can have their own definition of "one China" as long as they agree that Taiwan and China will reunify eventually.

Taiwan and China have remained rivals since the Nationalists were defeated by the Chinese Communists in a civil war in 1949 and fled to the island. In recent years, the Nationalist government in Taiwan has tried to ease hostility with the mainland.

"The two sides can swap representative missions to offset the current zero-sum confrontational situation," said the drafted agreement.

The drafted pact says the two sides must commit not to use military force as a tool for reunification, must respect each other's rights to be involved in international affairs, and resolve their disputes peacefully and in line with the United Nations charter.

Taiwan's mainland policy planning body, the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), should be charged with dealing with China's Taiwan Affairs Office under the cabinet to swap representative missions and tackle other cross-strait issues, according to the draft accord.

The drafter, Lee Teng-Ke, said the peace pact would expand trade and investment activities between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, reduce their confrontations and unnecessary spendings in foreign and defense affairs.

KMT committee deputy director Lin Yu-Hsiang, said he would submit the draft to the KMT for study.

The release of the paper came a day after Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui renewed his offer to Chinese counterpart Jiang Zemin to visit Taipei and for him to visit Beijing to talk with leaders there.

The president made the comment in a meeting with a group of visiting U.S. senators here shortly after they had visited China.

MAC Chairman Chang King-Yuh Monday told the senators that at the moment he saw no chance for a meeting between leaders of Taiwan and China due to Beijing's reluctance to resume talks.

Power struggle reportedly breaks out in India's Congress Party

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A power struggle has broken out in the Congress (I) over who should control the country's oldest political party, sources said Monday.

Former Premier P.V. Narasimha Rao, who quit as party president after corruption allegations but has refused to abandon control of the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP), is on a collision course with new President Sitaram Kesri, they said.

They added Sonia Gandhi, the influential but reclusive Italian-born widow of assassinated Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, was also involved in the battle.

"Congress President Sitaram Kesri is waging a proxy war on behalf of Mrs. Gandhi," a Rao loyalist told the Times of India newspaper Monday, on an alleged move to pressure the 75-year-old leader to relinquish his parliamentary position.

"Instead of asking Rao to step down as CPP leader, the combine will try to get its supporters elected to CPP posts and then build

Thailand's NAP forms 6-party coalition

BANGKOK (AFP) — Outgoing Deputy Premier Chaowalit Yongchaiyudh said Monday his New Aspiration Party (NAP) would lead a six-party coalition to form Thailand's next government.

He pledged to find experts and "people of quality" for the cabinet, an apparent reference to the previous government's perceived failure to find competent people for key positions, particularly economic ministries.

"Six parties have agreed to join the government," Mr. Chaowalit told reporters at the home of Chatichai Choonhavan, head of the Chart Pattana Party

Sri Lanka troops escalate search missions

COLOMBO (AFP) — Security forces have escalated their search and destroy missions against Tamil guerrillas in northeast Sri Lanka where arms caches have been discovered, the Defence Ministry said Monday.

Soldiers found 69 hand grenades from a hide out of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at Colombuthurai in the peninsula of Jaffna Sunday, the ministry said.

It said another 75 locally-made mortar bombs were found at another location within the Jaffna peninsula where security forces also fought a brief gun battle, leaving one Tiger wounded.

Another Tiger fighter was shot dead and his body was recovered together with an automatic assault rifle and ammunition in the adjoining district of Kilinochchi Sunday, the ministry said.

The sporadic clashes came as security forces remained on maximum alert for possible rebel attacks to mark the 42nd birthday of rebel supreme Velupillai Prabhakaran on Nov. 26, officials said.

The Tigers also mark a "heroes' week" in November to commemorate their dead fighters.

Officials said they had stepped up vigilance in the embattled northeast as well as in the capital Colombo to prevent attacks.

U.S. to make cautious pitch for rights in China

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska (R) — The United States intends to make an aggressive pitch for human rights during Secretary of State Warren Christopher's upcoming visit to China, officials said Sunday.

But as Mr. Christopher left Washington for the highest-level U.S. visit to China in more than two years, U.S. officials signalled a desire to avoid the kind of confrontation on human rights that marred the secretary's first, and last, visit there in March 1994.

Unlike the previous trip, Assistant Secretary of State John Shattuck, the top U.S. policymaker on human rights, was not expected to meet any pro-democracy activists while he is with Mr. Christopher in Beijing on Nov. 20-21, state department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

Mr. Burns noted that the United States was disappointed that a Chinese appeal court had upheld Chinese dissident Wang Dan's jail sentence.

And while Mr. Burns said Mr. Christopher "will be raising this issue (of human rights) aggressively" in talks with Chinese leaders, the spokesman would not say if the secretary would address the Wang case specifically.

Mr. Burns briefed reporters on the secretary's U.S. air force jet.

Mr. Christopher, whose plane stopped in Alaska near Fairbanks to refuel, was to spend the night in Sapporo, Japan and then arrive in Beijing Tuesday night. On Wednesday, he holds day-long talks with Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Premier Li Peng and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen.

U.S.-China ties took a sharp turn for the worse during Mr. Christopher's four-year tenure in President (Bill) Clinton's first term.

With Mr. Clinton now re-elected to a second term, Mr. Burns said Mr. Christopher was making the trip to "leave to his successor a relationship that's even, balanced and moving forward."

In addition to human rights, Mr. Christopher's talks with Chinese officials are expected to cover trade, arms sales and non-proliferation, Taiwan, Hong Kong, tensions on the Korean peninsula and the environment. But expectations for progress are low.

The goal is to ensure that

5 Kashmiris reported killed by Indian shelling

MUZAFFARABAD, Pakistan (R) — Indian mortar fire killed five civilians in the Pakistan-controlled portion of Kashmir at the weekend, Pakistani military and government officials said Monday.

A Pakistan army spokesman said three people died Sunday in Athmuqam, 80 kilometres northeast of the Azad (Free) Kashmir state capital Muzaffarabad, when a mortar round fired by Indian border forces struck a hotel.

Azad Kashmir's animal husbandry minister, Gbullah Rasool, said a separate mortar attack Sunday killed two people and wounded 14 in Mirpura village, 35 kilometres northeast of Muzaffarabad.

Mr. Rasool said Indian mortar fire continued for more than an hour in various parts of the Neelum Valley, which straddles the ceasefire line dividing the Indian and Pakistani portions of Kashmir.

"More than 150,000 inhabitants of the valley have vir-

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(Continued from page 1)
that has developed between the government and the opposition after the lifting of the...
I know that the fundamental reforms in the economic restructuring process are painful to you just as they are painful to me. But they are the only way to save the country," Mr. Kabariti said.
But the prime minister stressed that the government was counting on the awareness of the people in ensuring the success of the reform process.
After the economic setbacks resulting from regional factors, such as the Gulf war, we had to take courageous steps to stop the deterioration," Mr. Kabariti said.

(Continued from page 1)
primary law in November of the same year.
Government officials agree that a majority of members in Parliament are opposed to changing the one-person, one-vote formula. If only because they are only because they are on the basis of that formula.
The 57 deputies who voted in favour of the Kabariti government during the vote of confidence session reject any change to the formula," said one official. "The government sees no reason for changing that formula and thus losing the majority support in Parliament either."

(Continued from page 1)
seek the peace process and turn to an atmosphere of...
the "peace" for the...
of 1200 new...
homes, a country club, a...
school and a study centre for...



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Political life's new tone

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's speech from the Throne today, on the opening of the fourth and last session of the 12th Parliament, should be expected to set a new political tone for political life in the country based on our experiences in and lessons we learned from the democratisation process. Informed sources say that the thrust of the King's submissions for political reforms will focus on the strict separation of the three branches of government in a bid to enhance and energise the system of checks and balances, which is central to strengthening democracy. No one, of course, is talking here about the judiciary on whose role and function there is widespread agreement, at least on the need for it to be totally independent of the executive and legislative branches. As a matter of fact, there is a growing consensus that the independence of the judiciary should be further consolidated by removing all semblance of control over high court appointments by the executive branch.

It is rather the evident "overlapping" between the legislative and the executive branches of government, which usually has found expression in the formation of cabinets from members of Lower House, that is expected to take centre stage in the Monarch's speech. On this particular score, there are divisions in the country on the pros and cons of complete separation of Parliament from the executive. What makes the debate on the issue that much more complex is the lack of international consensus on whether to assign portfolios to deputies of the ruling party or parties in Parliament. There are several parliamentary democracies which subscribe to the notion of an organic link between the legislature and the executive, on top of which is Great Britain.

It will be noticed that many countries which follow the British system of government "developed a sophisticated political party system" that is not always found in fledgling democracies. Still even when a parliamentary rule in any given country is mature and well developed, the system of "fusing" the two branches of government is never without its drawbacks and flaws. Here in Jordan the choice between one style of parliamentary democracy and another is clearly not a simple matter and the debate on it is not yet crystallised. On the one hand, Jordan still has to develop a viable political party system, and on the other, Parliament has yet to consolidate its powers and extend its jurisdiction to enable it to stand up to the executive branch as equal partner in governing.

It may also be noted that appointing deputies cabinet members has further weakened the stature of the legislature and eroded its political clout vis-a-vis the cabinet. The trend to appease certain elements in parliament by assigning them portfolios irrespective of their abilities has in turn weakened the performance of the cabinet. It seems to us that what should determine our choice in the final analysis is the kind of people's representatives that the system can produce, which in turn depends largely on the method of selection in place. If deputies are elected on the basis of a flawed election law, as the current one is, then it would make little difference which way we opt to go in separating or fusing the two estates.

The only way to have a truly representative and effective parliament is to conduct national elections on the basis of a fair and equitable election law that meets international standards. This, we suggest, is the heart of the matter. The existing election law obviously falls short of the requirements of international norms and our own aspirations in more ways than one. Once there is in place a parliament that is truly representative of the people, then the preference for a complete separation of parliament from the executive would become more defensible. If political reforms are overdue, they need to be conducted in a uniform and integrated manner. We cannot aim to reform one dimension of parliamentary life without amending for the better the other aspects of it. In other words, we need package-deal reforms before we are able to champion one style of parliamentary democracy over another.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IN HIS column published in Al Ra'i Monday, economist Fahed Faneh supported the idea of fixing the minimum wage of workers in Jordan as suggested by Labour Minister Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh and said that such a move will benefit many of the workers who live under the poverty line. If the poverty line is considered at a JD 120 monthly wage for a normal family in Jordan, then, at least, the minimum wage for a worker should not fall below that level, said the writer who noted that many workers are not earning as much as present. Families living under the poverty line in Jordan account for 18 per cent of the population, according to recent estimates, said the writer who stressed that raising the workers' wages to the JD 120 level is very logical indeed if the country wants to deal with poverty. Of course, skilled workers and those with vast experience could continue to earn far more, but that depends on supply and demand in the labour market, added the writer. However, fixing minimum wages for workers might lead to negative results, like less demand by employers on workers, but, said the writer, setting minimum wage rates for workers is a humanitarian-motivated gesture that ought to be accepted by employers and the public at large.

The View from Fourth Circle

Statistics, poverty and the race between diligence and despair

By Rami G. Khouri

IF ANY single issue threatens all the countries in the Middle East — and fuels destabilising political protest movements — it is the issue of poverty and declining living standards. This simultaneously causes personal suffering and the unravelling of families and communities, prompts a psychological cycle of anger, fear and despair, drives people to extremism and violence and, in some cases, leads to authoritarianism, widespread disorder or even national collapse. We must address this phenomenon much more seriously than we have done to date in the Arab World, or else risk a cycle of disorder in coming decades that will make recent Arab national turbulence — remember Lebanon, Somalia, Yemen, Sudan and others — seem like child's play in comparison.

The issue of poverty and living standards in Jordan accurately mirrors the trends of our wider region. My colleague and friend, the always exciting columnist Fahed Faneh, has challenged the developmental community and its political decision-making compatriots in Jordan to come to terms with it more adequately — stating in recent columns in the Jordan Times and Al Ra'i that the real living standard of Jordanians has dropped 47 per cent in the last decade. This figure represents the decline in per capita real private consumption, based on official Jordanian statistics published by the Central Bank. Per capita real private consumption at constant 1985 prices (i.e. adjusted for inflation) declined from JD 667 in 1985 to JD 352 in 1995, he said.

At about the same time that Dr. Faneh was doing his calculations, I was also reviewing economic statistics for Jordan for the period 1980-1995, in preparation for some lectures and articles. My calculations show some equally worrying trends — though we should beware that the precise meaning of these statistics remains unclear, because they can be calculated in different ways and selectively manipulated.

My calculations show that gross domestic product (GDP) per capita at constant 1985 prices, calculated in dollar terms, declined to the last decade by an even higher rate than real private consumption — it dropped by 59 per cent, from \$2,244 in 1985 to \$908 in 1995; this reflects three factors that have ravaged Arab economies since the mid-1980s, namely economic slowdown, currency devaluations, and population increases. In dollar terms, though, GDP per capita at constant 1985 prices dropped by just 16 per cent, from JD 748 to JD 626.

In current dinar prices (i.e. disregarding rising inflation and declining foreign exchange values) GDP per capita increased by 103 per cent in the 1985-1995 decade, from JD 528 to JD 1,076; in dollar terms, GDP per capita in current prices was virtually unchanged over the last decade (it

actually dropped very nominally, from \$1,585 in 1985 to \$1,561 in 1995).

Over a longer time span, from 1980 to 1995, gross national product (GNP) at current prices increased by 271 per cent, population increased by 92 per cent, and per capita GNP at current prices increased by 93 per cent (from JD 543 in 1980 to JD 1,049 in 1995).

Per capita income figures are notoriously tricky beasts, and may or may not adequately reflect real quality-of-life conditions. A cursory scanning of other statistical indicators for Jordan over the last decade indicates that while our real income has been sliding badly, other quality-of-life indicators have improved or slipped only slightly.

For example, per capita water supply for household and municipal purposes (excluding agriculture) increased in the period 1985-1994, from 34 to 53 cubic metres per person. Per capita electricity consumed increased from .000796 gigawatt hours to .001045 GWH, and life expectancy at birth increased from 60 to 66 years; but, per capita domestic fuels consumption dropped slightly, from 1.05 to .9 metric tonnes per year.

So there you are — a nice, varied and often dramatic collection of statistics to choose from, readily available to support the very opposite arguments that the Jordanian economy is either in great shape or is collapsing steadily. The data is complemented by an equally diverse array of personal attitudes — from those who thank God daily for the good fortune of being Jordanian, to those who bemoan the cruel and unusual punishment of living in the vortex of a beleaguered economy suffering the cumulative consequences of dependence, frailty, corruption and incompetence.

We are aided in our attempt to assess our economic realities by several impressive and timely studies about poverty in Jordan and the wider Middle East, recently published by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). These studies — entitled Poverty in Western Asia: A Social Perspective, and Impact of Selected Macroeconomics and Social Policies on Poverty, the case of Egypt, Jordan and the Republic of Yemen — review a wealth of data and draw several conclusions. The most interesting ones, I thought, were that: a) poverty in this region resulted from a combination of domestic policy orientations and destabilising external political and military events; b) poverty's roots can be traced to distortions between political, economic, social and cultural policies within individual countries; c) rapid rural-to-urban migration, combined with an unsustainable, state-subsidised welfare approach to social development, resulted in deteriorating economic and living conditions for large numbers of people after state budgets flirted with

insolvency in the 1980s; and, d) the recent increases in poverty are only marginally due to the impact of the economic reforms and structural adjustment policies adopted by most Arab states and promoted and assisted by the World Bank and the IMF (on the contrary, ESCWA states, economic reforms will lower poverty in the long run, by promoting economic competitiveness and long-term growth; this sounds logical, but remains largely untested and is yet to be convincingly proven on a wide scale).

The ESCWA reports also confirm two key points that analysts, political economists and other such folks, including myself, have been raising for years: that the anticipated surge in private investments that would fuel long-term growth has not materialised as expected, or as fast as expected, and that "state-run social safety nets and social funds are not a substitute for a comprehensive poverty alleviation strategy, and should not be treated as one."

A third noteworthy point in the reports is about the imprecise duration of the transition period for economic reform and adjustment — a transition period during which poverty and unemployment increase, before growth is rekindled at a high rate that ultimately lowers unemployment and poverty. The transition period seems to drag on for much longer in practice than may have been anticipated by the economic theorists or government officials who launch these adjustment policies. I say this as a fundamental supporter of the need for economic adjustment — but a brand of adjustment that targets human equity and dignity along with growth rates and private sector profitability.

The available macroeconomics data and studies by ESCWA and others should prompt us to refocus political energy and social/economic policies in a manner that targets the poor and unemployed more rigorously. Jordan exemplifies both the strengths and weaknesses of modern Arab state policies, which promoted steady growth for many decades but have had to manage equally sustained slippage since the post-1983 regional recession. The contradictory statistics on living standards I mentioned above should cause us to address this issue more honestly, more openly, and with much more precision, humility and compassion.

The statistics, other social and economic indicators (child labour, bounced checks, home thefts, penchant to emigrate) and the widespread verbal expressions of people's immediate wants and long-term fears, all cry out for more diligence in making poverty alleviation in the Arab countries an urgent social and economic priority — before poverty returns in the future to devastate us as an explosive political time-bomb.

Jerusalem is wild card in 'renegotiations' over Hebron

By Farida Salaita

THE PALESTINIAN approach to the question of Jerusalem is in need of revision. Palestinians need to think of ways to reintroduce the Jerusalem question on the political map, and to develop mechanisms for a new strategy that goes beyond a purely defensive posture into the realm of an offensive strategy aimed at retaking control of their part of the city. Jerusalem is a winning card: its use could only bring benefits to the Palestinians. If the authorities cannot move ahead immediately, then Jerusalem as well as other Arabs and Muslims must move to put pressure on Israel regarding its policy in the Arab city.

The Israeli "demographic" offensive in the city is fierce, with dangerous ramifications for Palestinian rights in Jerusalem. Israel's actions preclude the Palestinians from remaining silent on Jerusalem until the final status negotiations, as stipulated in the Oslo agreements. These negotiations began in May 1996, but have been stalled by the new Likud government. Israel's current approach to Oslo, stalling at every opportunity, gives no reason for optimism that these negotiations might be started again anytime soon. If Israel is to succeed in renegotiating the Oslo terms regarding Hebron, then that should prove the exception and not the rule and Palestinians must demand a quid pro quo: renegotiating Hebron in return for opening the Jerusalem question now.

The outbreak of violence in the West Bank and Jerusalem last month, triggered by the opening of a controversial tunnel adjacent to Islamic and Jewish religious sites, had, in fact, little to do with the tunnel. Frustration with the lack of progress on the peace front and the deteriorating economic welfare of the Palestinians after repeated and lengthy closures aside, the tunnel reflects Israel's determination to alter the city's demographics by either pushing out its Arab inhabitants or making life so unbearable for them that



they are made to leave.

Israel is working daily on creating facts on the ground that aim at imposing a new political reality which would influence the final status negotiations. Israel, for many years now, has been implementing a racist policy of ethnic cleansing in the city: this is being pursued with even greater vehemence by the new right-wing government of Benjamin Netanyahu, which is irrevocably changing realities on the ground. This will render any final status negotiations over the city meaningless, contrary to Oslo stipulation that neither side should prejudice the outcome of these negotiations. And Israel is doing just that, as the Arab inhabitants are being evicted from Jerusalem.

Netanyahu's government has accelerated the implementation of inflammatory policies (introduced by former Labour governments, not to be forgotten) of changing the demographic map of the city. Policies include demolition of Arab houses "illegally" built, surreptitious confiscation of identity cards of Arab residents of Jerusalem, ostensibly for technical reasons, confiscation of Arab land to make room for Jewish houses, and the continued suffocation of the city from all sides by Israeli settlements, strangling natural Arab growth within the city.

Furthermore, Israel is changing the curriculum used in the Arab schools in Jerusalem. Thus the city population is being culturally and educationally severed from the West Bank, and the city cut off its natural Arab hinterland. The closures, meant to disconnect Jerusalem from the rest of the Palestinian territories, serve no less sinister a purpose: removing any economic and political continuity that exists. Jerusalem has always been a cosmopolitan city that depends on the surrounding regions to a large extent. Because of the closures, many businesses are moving to Ramallah and other areas, at the expense of politics.

The Likud ethos as a political success forcing Arafat to succumb to Israeli pressures to close down three offices of the Palestinian National Authority in Jerusalem, moving them outside the city. These measures will be accompanied by other steps, such as widening the activities of the Israeli police and Israeli security forces in East Jerusalem. All are designed to prove horrifyingly "true" the Israeli claims that Jerusalem is the "eternal, undivided capital of Israel."

Today, the final strategic phases are being implemented to impose Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem and complete the settlement circle in order to "purify" the

city of its Arab inhabitants.

Moreover, concentrating on talk of control of the city's "religious" sites and the dispute over which party controls them administratively merely obviates the underpinning reason for the conflict over Jerusalem: political sovereignty.

To adhere to the Oslo accords and leave Jerusalem to the final status negotiations is self-destructive. The question of Hebron was resolved, and so should Jerusalem's be. Israel's creating facts on the ground is also contrary to Oslo, which stipulates that the final status outcome should not be prejudiced. To succumb to Israeli demands that Jerusalem be negotiated last only allows Israel sufficient time to complete and cement its judaisation of the city. This will weaken any bargaining position the Palestinians might have at the negotiating table. It also signals a sure death to any Arab aspirations of retaining the Palestinian demographic nature of East Jerusalem and the Palestinians' political dream of having the city serve as a future Palestinian state's capital.

Israel must not be allowed to renegotiate clauses of the Oslo agreement; they are too crucial not to be renegotiated to force Palestinians to make further concessions they can ill-afford, as the case of redeployment in

Hebron. Hebron must not set a precedent, but negotiations over Jerusalem must begin now, before it is truly too late. It is that element of time which the Israelis are banking on as their trump card in negotiations over Jerusalem. The Palestinians need to preempt Israeli moves.

Coordination between Palestine and Jordan is paramount. There is need to come to an understanding on a common strategy, among themselves and the Arabs in general, rather than to be subjected to Israeli manipulation. Let the Israelis' renegotiated Hebron be the Palestinians' Jerusalem.

LETTERS

Unholy prejudice

To the Editor:

Before visiting Jerusalem last week, I braced myself for prejudice and an emotional grip. I anticipated the rude Israeli border patrol, who would thoroughly enjoy probing through my friends' underwear, tasting their toothpaste and firing mocking questions at them.

However, the last thing I expected was prejudice from the Arab gatekeeper of the Muslim holy shrines. As a Circassian-Jordanian, I was rather surprised when the gatekeeper denied my entry into the Al Aqsa Mosque. Though I was covered, he blocked the gate and said: "You are not a Muslim."

Confused, I could only ask why, as I handed him my Jordanian passport and swore to him that I was indeed a Muslim. Yet this man judged my religion from my physical features.

When I became insistent, he consulted to his walkie-talkie and asked: "Can you read the Quran?" "I'm just now learning Arabic, so I cannot read the Quran," I replied.

"Then you may not enter," he smiled, like a clerk at an exclusive country club.

I laughed at this prejudiced man, and he laughed back and actually stuck out his tongue.

All of this happened under the curious eyes of an Israeli soldier who was also "guarding" the Muslim gate.

What an excellent example of Muslim solidarity in front of an Israeli!

Having lived most of my life in the United States, I really wanted to learn Islam, my father's religion. I had thought Jerusalem would be an excellent place to begin.

Yet, there was this impolite, irrational judgment at the holy gate.

I expected this from the Israelis, but not from a fellow Muslim.

Hasn't His Majesty the King, and Jordan, contributed enough to the holy sites as to allow the entrance of a Jordanian Muslim woman to Al Aqsa mosque?

Tanya Habbjouqa,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Kabariti

(Continued from page 1)
that has developed between the government and the opposition after the lifting of subsidies.

"I know that (the fundamental reforms in the economic restructuring process) are painful to you just as they are painful to me. But what else can we do if (reform) is the only way to save the country?" Mr. Kabariti said.

But the prime minister stressed that the government was counting on the awareness of the people in ensuring the success of the reform process.

After the economic setbacks resulting from regional factors such as the Gulf war, "we had to take courageous steps to stop the deterioration," Mr. Kabariti said.

Election

(Continued from page 1)

porary law in November of the same year.

Government officials argue that a majority of members in Parliament are opposed to changing the one-person, one-vote formula if only because they won their seats in Parliament on the basis of that formula.

"The 57 deputies who voted in favour of the Kabariti government during the vote of confidence session reject any change to the formula," said one official. "The government sees no reason for changing that formula and thus losing the majority support in Parliament either."

Settlement

(Continued from page 1)

wreck the peace process and return to an atmosphere of war.

The plan call for the construction of 1,200 new homes, a country club, a senior citizens' home, a field school and a study centre for

"So we started to reduce expenditure and fight favouritism and financial and administrative corruption."

Mr. Kabariti said the economic reform process was beginning to show results, announcing that Jordan this year achieved an economic growth of six per cent.

"Despite the short period (that the government has spent to office) the pains and the obstacles that we have faced, I feel that the worst is behind us and we only have to persevere and be patient so that we achieve what we want," the prime minister said.

Noting that economic growth cannot be achieved without political stability, Mr. Kabariti pointed to the political uncertainties that had engulfed the region for decades, slowing economic growth.

Dr. Muasher meanwhile pointed out that the one-person, one-vote was a principle followed "successfully in every democratic country in the world and seen as rightly reflecting the choice of the people."

"We don't see why Jordan should be an exception," said the minister.

It is widely expected that a new election law or major amendments to the 1993 legislation will be introduced before the next parliamentary elections, due in November 1997.

The government has said that it would not introduce draft law or proposed amendments without a national consensus on the scope of the changes.

"We are committed to consulting closely with Parliament members, political

But, he said, the peace process is starting to lead to some positive results despite the difficulties it is facing. "We believe that peace was the inevitable conclusion to this (Arab-Israeli) conflict. We believe that peace is the strategic, the only choice for all countries of the region," said the prime minister.

But Mr. Kabariti said that "changes in certain countries directly involved with the peace process influence the (peace process) in a way that impedes economic growth but only for short periods."

"My government lives with you sufferings, hopes, aspirations and demands just as it does with the people of all parts of the Kingdom," Mr. Kabariti said.

"I know that there are pressing priorities...and my government will place your

parties and activists as well as institutions before moving in any direction," Dr. Muasher reaffirmed, noting that one of the pledges that Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti made in his policy statement to the legislature was close cooperation and consultation between the executive and legislative authorities.

Dr. Muasher also said the government had drafted several draft bills to be presented to Parliament during its regular session that begins today, Tuesday.

There are two groups of laws, he explained. The first concerns economy and moves designed to advance Jordan's quest for liberalisation and investment by making the local economic climate attractive to foreign and local capital. This

needs on top of its priorities," the prime minister said, adding that "we will work to enhance cooperation...solidarity and tolerance" so that the country becomes self-reliant.

Attending the celebrations were members of the Council of Ministers and all members of Parliament representing Karak Governorate except Deputy Nazih Ammarin.

Dr. Ammarin has submitted his resignation to the legislature citing a dispute he had with Prime Minister Kabariti during the August riots. It was reported that Mr. Kabariti and Dr. Ammarin had reconciled, but the deputy denied the reports. Parliament is expected to review the resignation during the regular session it begins today. The legislature could accept or reject the resignation.

group includes draft laws on companies, customs, securities and anti-monopoly.

The second group is related to public freedoms and official media. This will include amendments to the Press and Publications Law as well as draft laws that "disassociate or disengage" the government from state media institutions like Jordan Television and Radio and the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Muasher said.

The draft laws that he mentioned "are not inclusive but a general summary" of the bills that the government is keen to have endorsed by Parliament as soon as possible, he added.

since right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu overturned a four-year freeze on settlement construction after taking power in June.

Israeli media reports said in August that Mr. Netanyahu had approved construction of between 2,000 and 3,500 housing units in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

King

(Continued from page 1)
efforts over the long years through which we exerted strenuous efforts have finally materialised. We have just occupied the rank that our competent Armed Forces deserve.

"The response of the president of the United States crowned these fruitful efforts. The announcement that President Clinton has made opens the doors wide open for our Armed Forces for development and modernisation through acquisition of their defence requirements, and material and resources to implement their plans and programmes for research and technology transfer. We hope that the rest of the North Atlantic grouping will soon follow the example of the United States."

"We have thus started the interaction, communication, dialogue and selective cooperation that we have been seeking with the North Atlantic grouping, and we join our brothers in the Arab Republic of Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Mauritania, each of which have recently achieved the status we have now earned."

Peres

(Continued from page 12)
Labour legislator Uzi Baram.

Mr. Netanyahu bristled when asked whether he himself had leaked the allegations against Mr. Peres. "That's not worthy of a response," he said, adding that he called Mr. Peres on Sunday to assure him that he did not suspect him of any machinations.

Labour's young guard movement felt someone in Mr. Netanyahu's 18-member cabinet should be held accountable. Young guard activists bought 10 rabbits — the pet store did not have 48 — and brought them in a cage to parliament. "Let's uncover the cowardly minister," said a sign on the cage.

Refugees

(Continued from page 12)

in the establishment of the State of Israel, "Israelists narrowing the definition of 'displaced' and minimising their number," he added.

Noting that the adoption of a definition will determine who holds the right to return, Dr. Abdul Rahman said "even if Israelis are trying to close their eyes, (the Arabs) will keep struggling until common sense, if not justice, prevails."

U.N. Resolution 194 upholds Palestinian refugees' right of return or to receive compensation.

"Figures on compensation (owed to Palestinian refugees) have not been mentioned. But the amount should be consistent enough to mark a shift in the refugees' life standards from poverty to a dignified life," Dr. Abdul Hajeh said, adding that "the responsi-

bility to pay compensation is exclusively on Israeli shoulders."

He also suggested the establishment of an "international commission to quantify the material and moral suffering and losses of the refugees."

When any reference to U.N. resolution 194 was omitted in the final document of last May's Taba conference, which launched the Palestinian-Israeli final status negotiations, many observers complained that such omission would have weakened Palestinians' stand in the negotiations.

But Dr. Abdul Rahman rejected that contention.

"I do not see much difference between referring to 'international and U.N. resolutions' in general, as it is the case in the Taba declaration, and referring to 'U.N. resolution 194' in particular, as many said we should have done," he said.

He also suggested that the "big fuss" which surround-

ed the omission of any reference to U.N. resolution 194 was raised by "Israeli propaganda, always eager to attribute a failure to Palestinian diplomacy."

"U.N. resolution 194 remains the back-bone of Jordan's stand in the multilateral talks," declared Dr. Abdul Hajeh.

According to official statistics, Jordan spends an average of \$300 million a year to improve the living conditions of Palestinian refugees and better infrastructure in the 13 camps in the Kingdom.

Commenting on these figures, Dr. Abdul Hajeh argued that "the total expenditure for refugees in Jordan is much more than that."

He said one should "take into consideration that only 25 per cent of the 1.4 million Palestinian refugees living in Jordan reside in camps, and, therefore, any infrastructure project undertaken in the country benefits Palestinians as well as Jordanians."

Hebron

(Continued from page 1)

long as there is no progress on the Palestinian and other tracks, Qatar will freeze its relations with Israel," he said.

Qatar and Oman are the only Gulf Arab states to have established trade ties with Israel but Qatar announced last week it was suspending the links pending movement in the peace process.

Mr. Arafat's top deputy and chief negotiator, Mahmoud Abbas, said the main hurdle in negotiations with Israel now concerned the wording of a written pledge sought from Mr. Netanyahu that the Hebron handover will be followed by implementation of other outstanding aspects of the 1995 Oslo accords on self-rule.

These include further Israeli redeployments from the West Bank, the release of Palestinian political prisoners, the establishment of

free-passage corridors from autonomy areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the resumption of negotiations on the final status of the Palestinian territories.

Israel in turn has demanded that Mr. Arafat provide written assurances he will respect Palestinian commitments under the Oslo agreements, notably a pledge to crack down on violent anti-Israeli groups.

"The most important issue is the exchange of letters which must be made concerning matters after Hebron," Mr. Abbas said. Six weeks of intensive negotiations have failed to yield agreement on the Israeli demands.

Mr. Abbas said that following the latest round of talks late Sunday, agreement on the terms for the Hebron pullout was hung up on three issues.

The most important is Israel's insistence that its troops have broad freedom to re-enter areas handed over to Palestinian police to prevent or

respond to anti-Israeli attacks.

Differences also persist over the kind of arms the Palestinian police will be able to carry in the city and freedom of movement along a road running near Hebron's Jewish enclaves.

But Mr. Abbas said "all these issues are being dealt with in a serious manner and both sides are striving to reach a solution."

It was unclear when the next round of talks would take place.

Qatar supports the Palestinian position in these difficult negotiations and we support the clear Palestinian right (...) and we call on Israel to implement these agreements without delay," said Sheikh Hamad after talks with Mr. Arafat.

Sheikh Hamad also confirmed Qatar had frozen its process of normalisation with the Jewish state.

"As long as there is no progress on the Palestinian and other tracks, Qatar will freeze its relations with Israel," he said.

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Jordanian trucks will be allowed to transport goods directly to destinations in Israel

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Israel has agreed to allow Jordanian trucks to transport goods directly between the two countries without going through Israeli inspections that include lengthy loading and reloading procedures, officials from both sides said Monday.

They said both sides had agreed that security inspection of the vehicles and cargo would be carried out by Jordanian officials on the Kingdom's side of the crossing.

If the new arrangement, which is limited to Jordanian trucks headed for Israel, is successful, it will be followed by a similar move on Jordanian vehicles entering the Palestinian territories, the officials said.

The agreement is expected to take effect after a meeting between Industry and Trade Minister Ali Abul Ragheb and his Israeli counterpart Natan Sharansky in early December, said Israeli embassy spokesman Shalom Tourgenian.

It will be the second meet-

ing between Mr. Abul Ragheb and Mr. Sharansky in three weeks. They met on the fringes of the Nov. 13-15 Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference in Cairo and discussed means to expand trade and economic cooperation between the two sides.

At that meeting, the Israeli side confirmed that it was expanding the scope of products that the two sides would offer duty-free treatment and other items which are covered under tariffs. Finalisation of these agreements is expected at the Abul Ragheb-Sharansky meeting.

An end to cumbersome Israeli security inspection of Jordanian goods is expected to remove what the government and businessmen describe as a major hurdle in Jordanian-Israeli trade.

Present arrangements call for the unloading of the entire consignment at the Jordanian side of crossing point from the Jordanian vehicle and reloading onto an Israeli vehicle on the other side of the crossing. This often leads to lengthy delays, and, in some cases, to total loss of perishable

goods.

"Israel has agreed to accept Jordanian security inspection of the vehicles and goods since it is satisfied with the Jordanian procedures," said Mr. Tourgenian. "There is very good cooperation between Jordan and Israel on security issues," he added.

In the beginning, the new arrangement will be applicable only to Jordanian exports to Israel.

"Once this arrangement is found to be working well, it will set a precedent and will be expanded to include Jordanian exports to the Palestinian territories passing through Israeli-controlled land," the spokesman added.

Israeli Finance Minister Dan Meridor, speaking to the Jordan Times on the sidelines of the MENA conference in Cairo, said Israel expected a dramatic improvement in the flow of goods between Jordan and the Jewish state once U.S.-supplied equipment is placed on the crossings.

The equipment, worth about \$100 million, was promised by the U.S. following a spate of suicide bomb-

ings by Palestinian militants that killed 59 people in Israel in February and March.

The equipment will mainly include "drive-through" weapon and explosive detectors. Screening of a large truck is expected to be completed in less than 15 minutes.

Mr. Meridor said Israel expects to place some of the equipment at the crossing points to check all vehicles entering its territory.

"I cannot tell you when exactly the equipment will be in place, but it will be soon, and once it is installed we expect a much smoother flow of goods in and out of Israel," he said.

According to Mr. Meridor, "the scope of Jordanian-Israeli economic cooperation and trade is immense if we work out the right arrangements that are satisfactory to both sides."

The Israeli minister said "bureaucratic delays" were "not much of a problem" when compared with Israel's sense of its needs for "security."

But, he added, this was not a major concern when dealing with Jordan.

Iraqi dinar gains against dollar

BAGHDAD (R) — The Iraqi dinar gained against the U.S. dollar and prices of essential foodstuffs fell slightly, traders and money dealers said Monday.

Iraq's dinar currency soared to 1,550 to the dollar from about 1,780 on Sunday and money dealers are expecting a further surge in the volatile currency.

The rise in the value of the dinar has already sent down prices of essential commodities.

A kilogramme of sugar went down to 700 dinars from 850 on Sunday, a kilogramme of flour was sold at

500, down from 600, and a kilogramme of rice, stable diet of most Iraqis, fetched 500 down from 650.

Traders attributed the surge in the value of the dinar to a news report in Iraq's official newspapers on Monday saying that Turkey would double its trade volume with Baghdad.

The papers, quoting Turkish officials, said Turkey had expanded a border point with Iraq to handle more trucks loaded with foodstuffs to the sanctions-hit Iraq.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righner Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can benefit today from the extension of your interests and make fascinating new acquaintances. Later this evening you can consult with fellow associates concerning career activities which are important to you.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Do whatever your mate desires today and then state your own wishes. Later this evening go after the articles you desire so that you can use this information in order to make your career activities more successful.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is a good day today to contact those who are attracted to you and make their efforts towards business activities more beneficial. Do something to truly impress them to the point where you will gain recognition by a bigwig.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Make your home more charming today for those who live there and especially for invited guests. Listen to a fellow associate has to suggest about a new project and use this information to proceed in the direction of success.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Plan today for recreation and desire much happiness for your loved ones from it. This can later this evening be a most romantic day with the one you loved, especially if you do some special service for him or her.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Your home today needs a thorough going-over, so that it will look like new, especially for those who visit. Your ideas are fine later this evening for this, so make the effort to clean up your residence.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Making new contacts is wise today, so it would be a good idea to see as many fellow associates as possible for you to become prosperous. Show appreciation to those who have been loyal to you with some special presentation.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Seek a raise in pay for all the efforts you have put in with some new project. One who has much experience can give you fine advice if you go after it later this evening and you are able to proceed with career activities.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are able today to pursue your intimate goals enthusiastically and gain them easily with the assistance of knowledgeable people. Later this evening you can meet with close friends and have a fun time together.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Go after your ambitions today in a positive manner, which will allow you to proceed in a successful direction, be cheerful for best results. Be with the one you love tonight and have a very romantic time together.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be your gregarious self today and see many friends and allies so that you will enjoy the time together. This will accomplish more than you think towards you being successful in your career objectives.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Handle outside career activities — be it vocational or civic or concerning credit — and get everything arranged nicely. Later this evening you can spend some quality time with your mate and have a romantic time together.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye.

Food summit fails to resolve bickering over trade

ROME (R) — World leaders unanimously decried hunger last week but a five-day U.N. food summit ended Sunday as it began — deeply divided over whether free trade is the best way to offer hope to more than 800 million under-nourished.

Like virtually all gatherings where rural incomes are at stake, the world's first food summit left images of wealthy nations at odds with developing countries and squabbling with each other over trade.

"Emerging agriculture has everything to fear from excessive liberalisation," French Farm Minister Philippe Vasseur, taking a swipe at France's old trade foe the United States, said Saturday.

The United States, backed by the World Bank and Australia, issued a robust call at the summit for free trade to attack hunger's root causes of poverty and instability. It told both rich and poor nations they needed more of the market's medicine.

But summit star Fidel Castro of Cuba captured the hearts of many developing nations when he roared Saturday against "capitalism, neo-liberalism, the laws of a wild market," debt and underdevelopment that he said were killing the world's poor.

As the veteran communist returned to his seat, Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom accused the West of hoarding and then dumping its own food while millions faced starvation.

"Such unethical, immoral and irresponsible practices must be stopped," he declared.

The organiser of the "other summit" of non-governmental organisations complained Sunday that the main meeting had lacked the courage to face up to the laws of the market.

"Not only is world trade incapable of resolving food insecurity, it is also often at the origin of it," Antonio Onorati said.

The timing of the summit,

which opened Wednesday with an appeal by Pope John Paul to bury the quest for pure profit, ensured that trade went further than ideological warfare.

Taking place in Rome a month before 125 nations send ministers to Singapore to review a 1994 global trade pact, the summit seemed to many a rehearsal for future trade rows.

The World Food Summit's plan of action to halve hunger within 20 years commits nations to carrying out the Uruguay Round trade pact aimed at pulling down protectionism.

The Dec. 8-13 meeting in Singapore of the World Trade Organisation, the Geneva-based guardian of the accord, will in part set the pace for new trade talks due to begin in 1999.

If the Rome summit is anything to go by, the world's major trading states are already jockeying for advantage.

India and other developing nations lined up to slam the

last accord for unleashing market forces too fast. France's Vasseur said he would try to shield agriculture from new subsidy cuts, while Australia rounded on European farmers who are paid not to produce and said the old reforms had merely been too weak.

Caribbean Island states bemoaned the loss of preferential markets for their banana exports, an economic lifeline.

Negotiations for the Uruguay Round, which took seven years and included the first multilateral effort to liberalise food, were nearly derailed by French opposition to cuts in subsidies.

While nations fought over ideals in the main arena, the sidelines offered glimpses of trade clashes of the future. In modern disputes, trade is increasingly muddled with science.

Protesters hit the headlines by stripping naked in front of U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman over genetically modified soybeans that some Europeans want banned. Washington says the beans are safe and has warned that health controls are increasingly being used as a trade barrier.

Information Minister Marwan Muasher meanwhile clarified that information available to Jordan indicated that an "infiltrator" shot dead by Israeli security forces near the border with Jordan late last month was trying to enter the Kingdom rather than Israel as was first reported.

The man was unarmed and did not have any identification papers on him. First reports said Israeli security forces summarised that he was infiltrating from Jordan because he had a packet of Jordanian-made cigarettes on him, reports in the Israeli press said at that time.

REUTERS • REUTERS •

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLS	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.4967	0.5962	1.2640	111.12	1.3413	1511.51	1.6633	5.0740
DE Mark	0.6872	-	0.3967	0.6447	74.19	0.8348	1007.06	1.1212	3.3794
GB Sterling	1.6716	2.5080	-	2.1126	165.77	2.2424	2527.72	2.6130	8.4807
CH Franc	0.7911	118.44	0.4724	-	67.65	1.0596	1191.67	132.76	3.9963
JP Yen	0.0090	1.3467	0.5373	1.1367	-	1.2056	13.55	151.07	4.5549
CA Dollar	0.7455	1.1173	0.4458	0.9425	1.21	-	1124.69	1.2537	3.7788
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9926	0.3961	0.6637	1358.14	0.6666	-	11.14	3.3576
NL Guilder	0.5941	89.15	0.3555	75.19	66.11	0.7977	698.89	-	3.0136
FR Franc	0.1971	0.2956	0.1179	24.9349	21.92	0.2646	33.16	33.1600	-

Energy		
Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	23.30	23.50
W. Texas	23.30	24.10
Bony	23.30	23.50
Dubai	21.10	21.85
UL Gas	217.00	218.00

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.3999	0.15953	0.33794	29.6769
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.40855	0.16298	0.34521	30.315
KW Dinar	3.3501	5.0226	2.00401	4.24448	372.656
BH Dinar	0.3770	3.97772	1.56855	3.38134	295.159
CY Pound	2.1828	3.273	1.3057	2.7626	242.927

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	379	379.5
Silver (oz's)	4.9	4.92
Platinum (oz's)	344.5	345.5
AL (3 Months)	1433	1436
CU (3 Months)	2138	2141
Zinc (3 Months)	1058	1056
Lead (3 Months)	718	718
NI (3 Months)	6660	6660

Currency Denominations (Bids)									
Coin	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month	Month
USD	5.21	5.37	5.39	5.37	5.37	5.37	5.37	5.37	5.37
GBP	5.88	6.37	6.56	6.62	6.66	6.66	6.66	6.66	6.66
JPY	0.34	0.35	0.41	0.41	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56
DEM	3.00	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.06	3.06	3.06	3.06	3.06
FRF	3.32	3.34	3.41	3.45	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
CHF	1.65	1.66	1.81	1.93	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
ITL	7.45	7.21	8.89	6.70	8.82	8.82	8.82	8.82	8.82

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chg	% Chg	High	Low	Pr Cls	Pr Cls	Pr Cls
New York	DOW JONES	8334.99	-13.04	-0.21	8356.09	8334.24	8348.03	8348.03	8348.03
New York	S&P 500	734.91	-2.71	-0.37	738.17	734.91	737.62	737.62	737.62
London	FT-SE 100	3962.1	3.9	0.1	3966.4	3952.2	3958.2	3958.2	3958.2
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20799.37	-133.36	-0.64	20940.2	20773.3	20929.7	20929.7	20929.7
Paris	CAC 40	2229.88	-10.85	-0.48	2235.38	2223.81	2240.33	2240.33	2240.33
Frankfurt	DAX	2763.84	-31.96	-1.14	2793.27	2763.84	2795.8	2795.8	2795.8

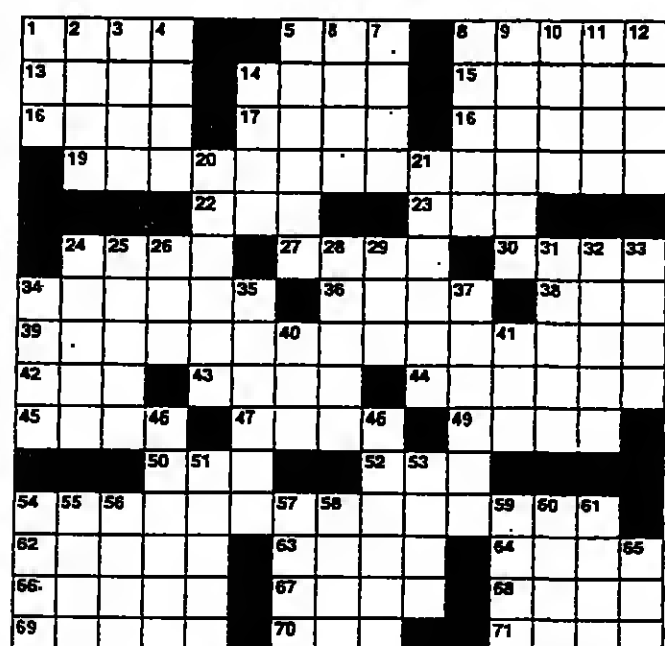
Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lb)	121.17	Spot
Cocoa (5/ton)	1365	Spot
Sugar (5/ton)	307	Spot
Wheat (5/ton)	140	Spot
Soy (c/lb)	22.23	Spot
Tee (5/100kg)	118	Spot
Barley (5/100kg)	2.21	Spot
Rice (5/ton)	470	Spot

JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1783	1.1842
DE Mark	0.4694	0.4717
CH Franc	0.5541	0.5569
FR Franc	0.1369	0.1396
JP Yen	0.6385	0.6397
NL Guilder	0.4185	0.4206
IT Lira	0.4682	0.4885

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

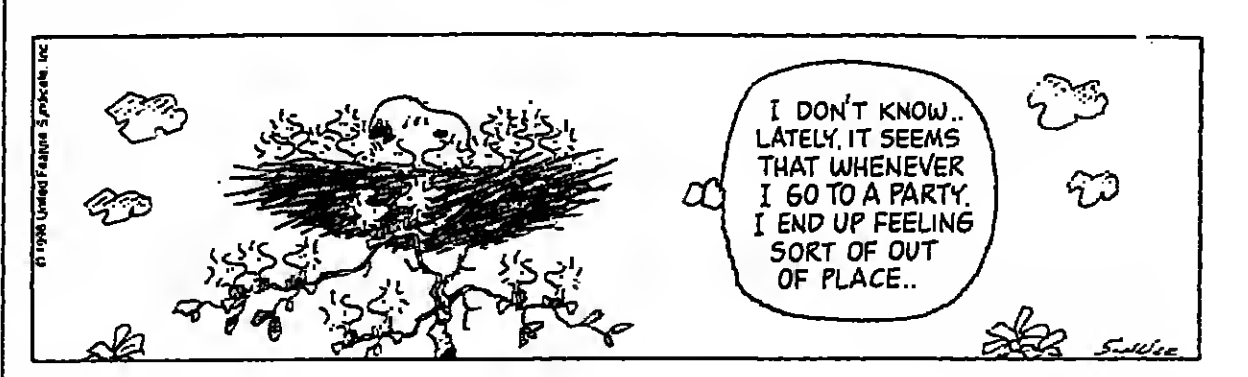
THE Daily Crossword by Frances Burton

- ACROSS**
- Young animal
 - Rather
 - Actor John
 - Seed cover
 - Singer Guthrie
 - Hairan or Lucy
 - Notre —
 - Strives
 - Grasping device
 - Life, in a song
 - Money earned: abbr.
 - Stooge name
 - Take five
 - Ticket leftover
 - Have courage
 - Pick out
 - Metal sources
 - Hesitate in speech
 - Lovely complexion or fruit dish
 - Time zone letters
 - Angered
 - Instrumental composition
 - Colors
 - Orient
 - Nothing: Sp.
 - In addition
 - Beer kin
 - Favorite
 - Osmond sister
 - Actor Alan
 - Rectangular
 - African antelope
 - Search for
 - Mold-ripened cheese
 - Poet Alfred
 - Selleck or Brokaw
 - Surgical bristle



- DOWN**
- Ill-mannered man
 - Semite
 - Stretch car
 - Traveled by air
 - Wanders aimlessly
 - Guinness or Baldwin
 - Snack
 - Houston player
 - Put away
 - Singer Tennille
 - "Picnic" author
 - Loch —
 - English river
 - Kind of nut
 - Encloses snugly
 - Thin
 - Make jubilant
 - Champagne word
 - Amphibians
 - Vase
 - Leading
 - Lariat var.
 - Actress Samms
 - Raced
 - Shipworm
 - Biscuitlike pastries
 - Aegean, e.g.
 - Genetic code letters
 - Brinv
 - tn single file
 - Things lacking
 - Unauthorized disclosure
 - So be it
 - AKO, CA
 - Beseech
 - Swift
 - Butter
 - substitute
 - Recedes
 - Yesteryear
 - Egress
 - Voice vote

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Busine

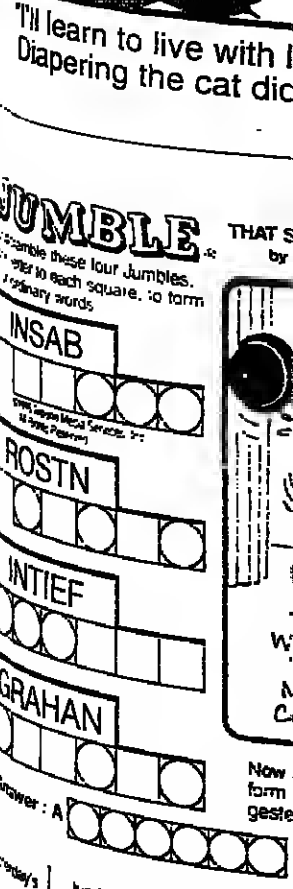
COMPANIES — Con-
related companies
moving the Internet
using the world's
growing medium to
communicate with the pub-
lic. A bewildering
array of subjects, a Reuters
survey showed 83 per
cent of top advertisers in
the survey, comprising multi-
national firms in the United
States, Western Europe and
Asia, had created
web pages on the Inter-
net, allowing compa-
nies to communicate with
the world who

Busi

Journal of news from the
Petroleum refinery
storage station sou

THE JORDAN Petroleum Re-
finery is building a new station to
store petroleum products in south A-
mman. The station will be built on
the site of the old station, which was
destroyed by a fire in 1994. The new
station will have a capacity of 100,000
barrels of oil. The project is being
financed by the Jordanian government
and the World Bank. The station will
be built in two phases. The first phase
will be completed by the end of 1997.
The second phase will be completed
by the end of 1998. The station will
be a major asset for the Jordanian
petroleum industry.

THE BETTER HALF.



Companies rush to Internet — survey

LONDON (R) — Consumer-related companies are rushing to the Internet and using the world's fastest-growing medium to communicate with the public about a bewildering range of subjects, a Reuters survey revealed Monday.

The survey showed 83 per cent of top advertisers in Britain, comprising multinationals in the United States, western Europe and Japan, and local British companies, had created "home pages" on the Internet's worldwide web.

Having a home page or "website" allows companies to communicate with anyone in the world who

has a computer, modem, phone line and Internet connection.

The survey showed people on the Internet could use company websites to buy books, get insurance quotes, track soccer results, check flight schedules, learn how to fit a bathroom, get advice on choosing a dog and a vast number of other day-to-day activities.

While companies like Britain's Tesco and J.Sainsbury allow Internet users to order wine, chocolate and flowers from their websites other companies use websites for softer marketing.

Procter Gamble, the

world's biggest advertiser, has about 10 websites, but singles out its "parenttime" site as a valuable connection to consumers.

The website — located at <http://www.parenttime.com> — is a joint venture with Time Warner — provides information for busy parents about child development.

"The growth of the Internet is exponential. It's where consumers are going for information and entertainment. We want to be where our consumers are," Elizabeth Moore, spokeswoman for Procter Gamble, told Reuters.

Britain's Bass Brewers said they created a website at <http://www.faircliff.com> to show the public they love soccer. The site has information about soccer clubs, results and players, and offers soccer club shirts and other merchandise.

Companies surveyed stressed that the Internet was in its infancy and the only company surveyed that said it "made money" from its website was BSKYB, the satellite broadcaster.

Most were also spending only a small portion of their advertising expenditure on

Asian carriers flying into stormy financial weather

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Asian airlines are flying into stormy financial weather, with profits being buffeted by rising fuel prices and overcapacity amid a slowdown in key economies, industry executives and analysts say.

Leading regional carriers Singapore Airlines Ltd. (SIA) and Japan Air Lines Co. Ltd. (JAL) have announced poor interim results, blaming fuel costs and other factors for their lacklustre showing.

"If it affects Singapore Airlines the way it does, you can imagine how it affects others. It has one of the most fuel-efficient fleets," said an aviation analyst with a global investment house.

The turbulence has hit regional carriers in the midst of costly fleet modernisation programmes.

Apart from multibillion-dollar financing requirements, fleet upgrading has boosted capacity during an economic slowdown, resulting in a soft cargo market, although passenger traffic growth remains strong.

SIA announced a 7.2 per cent hike in group

after-tax profit to \$398 million in the six months to September — propped up by a hefty surplus from sales of aircraft and spares which neutralised an 11.4 per cent plunge in operating profit.

Despite healthy traffic growth, SIA profits for the year ending March 1997 are forecast by analysts to be just slightly higher than last year's. The strong local dollar, high fuel prices and a soft cargo market were blamed by company officials.

SIA chief executive Cheong Chooong Kong said that "while there may be some respite on the currency front, the direction of fuel prices in the second half is uncertain, as is the recovery of the cargo market."

Cathay Pacific also felt the impact of high fuel costs and overcapacity in the six months to June, but net profit was boosted to \$213 million, up 67.5 per cent, by exceptional profit from the sale of part of its shareholding in associate company Dragonair Ltd. Chinese-controlled Dragonair itself this month announced it was postponing its listing for at

least a year due to slow earnings growth, forecast to stay in single-digit territory this year.

JAL, Japan's biggest airline, reported a 60.7 per cent plunge in parent pre-tax profit to \$47 million in the six months to September due to sharply higher fuel prices.

Competitor All Nippon Airways Co. Ltd. (ANA) fared better, posting a 32.9 per cent increase in parent pre-tax profit with strong revenues from international flights.

JAL managing director Jiro Sagara said his company was not able to overcome "unstoppable yield declines and the significant rise in fuel costs, which offset the benefits stemming from the firm international traffic demand."

Prices of jet fuel were hovering around \$30 a barrel in the Singapore market last week, from about \$23.50 a year ago, and world demand is rising going into winter.

"Oil prices are going to stay strong right until the end of the decade," said Ng Weng Hoon, editor of the monthly industry journal Singapore Oil Report. "The days of cheap prices are gone."

Malaysia Airlines System, which is to report its interim results this month, enjoys relief from escalating fuel costs through its supply contract with Petroleum Nasional.

But analysts say its difficulties could stem more from heavy expenditure on fleet modernisation, including the possibility of being a launch customer of the new generation of "Super Jumbo" Boeing jets.

According to the Orient Airlines Association (OAA), fuel accounts for an average of 13 per cent of its 16 members' airline costs.

Growth in freight capacity outstripped demand among member-carriers in June and July, OAA figures showed, but growth in passenger revenues managed to stay ahead of growth in available seats.

The members' combined operating profit totalled \$2.09 billion for fiscal 1994-95, up 61 per cent from the year before.

Profit growth is expected to be significantly weaker in the 1995-96 year, OAA sources said.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Petroleum refinery plans building storage station south of Amman

** THE JORDAN Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) plans to build a new station to store and load various petroleum products in south Amman, JPRC Director-General Abdul Wahab Al Zu'bi has revealed. He said petroleum products will be pumped from the refinery in Zarqa to new tanks in south Amman from where fuel will be loaded by tankers to various gas distribution stations in eastern and southern parts of the capital as well as the governorates for Madaba, Karak, Tafleh, Maan and Aqaba.

Mr. Zu'bi explained that the aim of this project is to ease the pressure of fuel tankers at the site of the refinery and to provide an alternative point to load petroleum products. "This project will surely result in savings as pipelines will substitute the current long distance method of transporting fuel by tankers," he indicated.

The director-general also revealed that the refinery is currently implementing a project to produce unleaded petrol as an alternative gasoline for vehicles. The project, which will cost about \$1 million and is being partially financed by the World Bank, will cover the Kingdom's need of unleaded petrol, Mr. Zu'bi said.

Although raising the capacity of the "strategic storage" or the "operating storage capacity" was described by Mr. Zu'bi as the most important project currently under implementation, he mentioned the building of a new crude oil pipeline as another important project that will be implemented in the future.

He said that the new pipeline will either be from the Tapline, if an agreement was reached to supply the refinery with Saudi oil, or from Iraq to Jordan through a 20-inch diameter pipeline or by extending a 20-inch pipeline from Aqaba to the site of the refinery.

Mr. Zu'bi said a study conducted by the JPRC has concluded that it is not feasible to build a new refinery at Aqaba because such a project carries high investment cost, exceeding \$2 billion, that would yield little return. Noting that such a return proves that the non-feasibility of the project, Mr. Zu'bi indicated that a refinery at Aqaba would be far from the consumption centres and that, such a situation, would entail heavy transportation traffic and higher costs or laying pipelines to bring petroleum products to the consumers.

He emphasised that the best that could be done to meet the Kingdom's need of petroleum products in the future would be to make new expansion at the Zarqa refinery. He stressed that the expansion option would be less costly as it will not require building new infrastructure (Al Rai).

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

INSAB

ROSTN

INTIEF

GRAHAN

Answer: A (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: APPLY TOXIN RAREFY MEASLY
Answer: Why the banker used the vault — TO PLAY IT "SAFE"

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 18/11/1996

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	OIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
252.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	13.4	1.43	2	120	29400	245.00	245.00	0.00
1.250	.880	MID-EAST INV. BK.	70.3	0.00	15	10700	12189	1.04	1.01	-.03
5.250	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.7	2.21	3	710	3057	4.95	4.75	-.10
1.200	.880	JOR. GULF BANK	5.4	7.69	28	86125	76258	.89	.91	.02
4.180	3.300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.4	0.00	22	6513	23471	1.52	1.52	0.00
1.590	1.000	PHILADELPHIA INV. BK.	0	0.00	9	16000	19566	1.19	1.24	.05
BANK SECTOR TOTALS	INDEX: 187.39	ICHI: -0.09	81	120279	166003					
1.900	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.8	-7.69	23	15500	24351	1.59	1.56	-.03
6.050	4.420	ARAB INTL. HOTELS	16.9	3.02	1	150	638	4.42	4.25	-.17
1.960	1.080	KAYL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	7	2100	2110	1.10	1.10	0.00
1.050	.880	REAL ESTATE INV.	12.8	4.19	1	600	534	.92	.89	-.03
3.660	3.130	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	13.6	5.81	6	3750	12870	3.42	3.44	.02
1.270	.940	ZAKKA EDUCATION	0	-0.00	2	850	867	1.03	1.02	-.01
1.200	.820	UNION LAND DEV.	0	0.00	1	1000	860	.89	.86	-.03
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS	INDEX: 107.41	ICHI: -1.27	41	23950	42429					
26.620	18.950	JOR. TOBACCO & CIG.	16.5	-3.68	1	30	414	19.50	20.48	.98
3.720	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	18.5	-3.10	12	6785	21840	3.25	3.23	-.02
3.550	2.710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	12.7	0.00	1	250	750	3.00	3.00	0.00
10.520	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.2	8.79	2	260	600	9.07	9.10	.03
1.490	1.150	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	51.5	0.00	1	200	252	1.22	1.16	-.06
4.870	3.100	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	17.0	0.47	36	7450	23981	3.13	3.05	-.04
2.600	2.050	JORDAN DAIRY	13.2	6.98	2	107	230	2.15	2.15	0.00
3.310	2.500	GENERAL MINING	6.4	12.00	2	350	875	2.55	2.50	-.05
8.000	4.250	DAR ALDAMA DV. INV.	4.60	0.00	9	1900	8812	4.40	4.35	-.05
.960	.450	KAYL. WOLZ INC. NIMICO	0	0.00	21	15450	8564	.51	.53	.02
1.500	1.060	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	7.6	9.25	9	1500	2147	1.15	1.12	-.03
1.090	.550	NATIONAL INDUS.	8.1	10.81	6	3000	1825	.55	.55	0.00
1.940	.930	INTERNED. PETRO. CHEM.	22.3	0.00	7	1600	1518	.94	.93	-.01
1.910	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	22.3	0.00	4	900	1087	1.17	1.19	.02
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS	INDEX: 110.30	ICHI: -0.08	169	70650	107131					
GRAND TOTAL	INDEX: 146.81	ICHI: -0.16	291	214879	315563					
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 18/11/1996										
.790	.440	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	22.1	0.00	8	11350	4132	.57	.55	-.02
.800	.430	JOR. TRADE FAC.	13.9	0.00	5	2150	1135	.53	.52	-.01
.950	.440	KAYL. CONFER. CENTERS	8	0.00	5	10500	1073	.46	.48	.02
.930	.700	UNION INV. 501	67.0	0.00	8	40500	6100	.70	.70	0.00
1.110	.410	ARAB PET. INVEST.	15.6	0.00	21	35400	12189	.41	.41	0.00
.950	.690	AL-DANAYAT 751	15.6	0.00	6	10089	4439	.69	.69	0.00
.640	.340	JOR. INDUS. MACHINERY	8	0.00	2	2000	700	.35	.35	0.00
1.150	.630	UNIV. HEALTH	8	0.00	1	1800	189	.63	.63	0.00
1.760	1.320	KAYL. CHURCH	8	0.00	6	1350	1270	1.33	1.31	-.02
.700	.450	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	0	0.00	1	2000	900	.46	.45	-.01
1.000	.520	NAIL, TEXTILE	0	0.00	3	1250	705	.56	.57	.02
1.100	.450	KAYL. WOLZ INC. NIMICO	0	0.00	33	52500	22850	.45	.43	-.02
1.080	.750	JORDAN STEEL	8	0.00	4	5500	1225	.75	.75	0.00
.780	.430	ARAB ELECT. INDUS.	8	0.00	1	500	240	.48	.48	0.00
1.310	1.070	UNION TOBACCO 751	2	0.00	5	3250	2843	1.07	1.04	-.03
.840	.580	KAYL. PHARM. 651	8	0.00	3	1450	334	.58	.58	0.00
.830	.400	INDUS. ENG.	24.6	0.00	6	8750	3500	.40	.40	0.00
.800	.590	KAYL. VESTRY	8	0.00	2	5500	1345	.60	.60	0.00
1.500	.530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	7.6	0.00	22	32250	23995	.63	.65	.02
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Broncos breezy by Patriots, Bills stop Bengals

FOXBORO (R) — Terrell Davis scored three touchdowns to help Denver build a 24-0 halftime lead and the Broncos coasted to a 34-8 victory over the new England Patriots on Sunday.

Davis rushed for 154 yards, 32 carries and leads the NFL with 1,209 rushing yards. It was the sixth 100-yard rushing game for Davis this season.

"It's real hard to cut on the field and I knew my numbers had to be a little more subtle today," said Davis. "I just told myself to run hard today and once I got into the secondary, I tried not to go down on the first hit."

The win was the seventh in a row for the Broncos, who own the NFL's best record at 10-1.

In Buffalo, Jim Kelly threw for a touchdown and ran for another and Thurman Danforth rushed for 78 yards as the Buffalo Bills stopped the Cincinnati Bengals, 31-17.

Kelly was 13-of-22 for 199 yards and one interception, which was returned 31 yards for a TD by cornerback Ashley Ambrose in the second quarter.

In Atlanta, Bobby Hebert passed for 229 yards and two touchdowns for the Falcons, who scored all of their points in the first half, but fell on a 17-15 victory over the New Orleans Saints in a battle of NFC West Celardwellers.

Hebert completed 26-of-39 passes, including scoring strikes of eight yards to Eric Metcalfe in the first quarter and five yards to Terance

Mathis in the second period.

In Detroit, Jason Hanson kicked a 43-yard field goal with 4:32 remaining and Barry Sanders rushed for 134 yards as the Detroit Lions snapped a four-game losing streak with a 17-16 victory over the Seattle Seahawks.

The Seahawks had a chance to win on the final play, but Todd Peterson's 43-yard field goal try sailed wide right as time expired.

In Indianapolis, Cary Blanchard kicked four field goals, including a 37-yarder with 8:10 to play to provide the go-ahead points as the Indianapolis Colts rallied past the New York Jets, 34-29.

Blanchard, a former Jet, added a 50-yard field goal with 1:24 left to give Indianapolis (6-5) a five-point lead.

The Jets have lost 10 games for the third straight season.

In Kansas City, Kimble Anders scored on a 10-yard run in the second quarter and Mark Collins made two key defensive plays in a scoreless second half to lead the Kansas City Chiefs to a 14-10 victory over the Chicago Bears.

Anders' 10-yard touchdown run with four-and-a-half minutes left in the first half gave Kansas City the lead for good at 10-7.

In Philadelphia, Gus Frerotte found tight end Jamie Asher for two touchdowns passes and Scott Blanton kicked four field goals as the Washington Redskins regained first

place in the NFC East with a 26-21 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles.

Washington (8-3) moved a game ahead of the Eagles (7-4) for the top spot in the division.

The Redskins got 84 yards on 25 carries from Terry Allen, while Waters ran for 87 on 26 attempts for Philadelphia.

In Pittsburgh, Yancey Thigpen caught his first two touchdown balls of the season and the Pittsburgh defense scored once and forced another costly turnover as the Steelers cruised past the Jacksonville Jaguars, 28-3.

The Steelers (8-3) avenged a 24-9 opening-day loss to Jacksonville (4-7) by forcing four turnovers, but the two fumbles they forced on Jaguars quarterback Mark Brunell made the difference.

"A game of big plays — we made more of them than they did," Steelers coach Bill Cowher said.

In St. Louis, Anthony Johnson rushed for 121 yards, including a seven-yard scamper with 1:31 left in the third quarter that snapped a tie and boosted the Carolina Panthers to a 20-10 defeat of the St. Louis Rams.

It was Johnson's fourth 100-yard effort of the season. Beuerlein completed 13-of-28 passes for 136 yards with one interception and one touchdown.

One week after scoring 59 points against Atlanta, St. Louis was held to one touchdown and 243 total yards against the Panthers (7-4).

Honduras score 11 but still go out of World Cup

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Honduras hammered 11 goals past hapless St. Vincent on Sunday, beating the Caribbean amateurs 11-3, but were still knocked out of the World Cup as rivals Jamaica beat Mexico 1-0 at home.

Jamaica had needed only a point from their game in Kingston to reach the final stage of the CONCACAF World Cup qualifying tournament at the Honduras expense but took all three thanks to an 82nd-minute goal by Ian Godison.

Jamaica finished top of semifinal stage group three, one point ahead of the apathetic Mexicans, who had already guaranteed their place in the six-team final.

St. Vincent, who lost all six group games and conceded 33 goals, also let in 11 goals in a World Cup qualifier against Mexico four years ago.

Honduras, whose only appearance in the World Cup finals was in Spain in 1982, had to make up a difference of 10 goals as well as hope for a Jamaica defeat.

Milton Nunez and Nicolas Suazo both scored hat-tricks for Honduras, who were left to lament their failure to beat Jamaica at home last month. That game ended 0-0.

Mexico did Honduras no favours by selecting a depleted squad which featured seven uncapped players. The stars, such as goalkeeper Jorge Campos and strikers Carlos Hermosillo and Zague, were involved in club matches for the Mexican championship, which carried on regardless of the national team's World Cup commitment.

Costa Rica beat Guatemala 3-0 at home to join the United States at the top of Group 1 which is still in its early stages. Costa Rica and the United States are clear favourites to qualify from the group, which also contains Trinidad.

Canada are already through from Group 2, with El Salvador and Cuba fighting for the second spot. The final CONCACAF round, to be played next year, will decide the region's three representatives at the 1998 World Cup.

1st Division Basketball Championship starts today Orthodoxi, Ahli, Jazireh battle for title in playoffs as JBF holds women's all-star tourney

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The country's second most popular sport — basketball — comes back to life Tuesday with the start of the First Division Basketball Championship.

While the traditional, decade-long Ahli-Orthodoxi rivalry will never cease to have its special flavour for fans of both teams, the emergence of a third team — Al Jazireh — as a serious contender in the past season has taken the game to new heights and even changed the way officials organise the country's most prestigious basketball event.

For the first time in the history of the championship, the top four teams in the six-team tourney will fight it out for the title in a two-round playoff. Many observers have been suggesting this system for years hoping that it will create a tougher competition and giving fans a chance for more interesting matches.

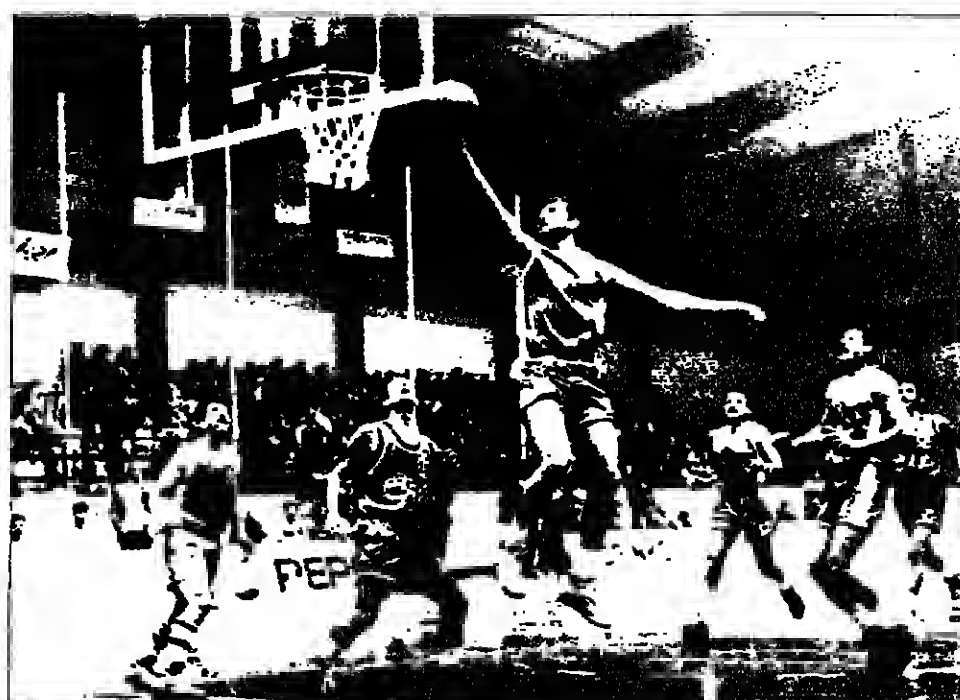
The change was brought about by the surprising championship last year when Al Jazireh's first round win over Al Ahli cost the latter their three-year reign and handed Al Orthodoxi the crown they had last won in 1991.

The existence of a third team beside the top two has made the first division an interesting championship to follow. After the first round concludes, the top four will qualify for the playoffs. Al Ahli and Al Yarmouk have the chance to be the fourth qualifier. The last two teams will play the top two in the second division to determine if they keep their place in the first division or drop to the second.

All the teams play on the opening day in Irbid and Amman with Al Ahli meeting Al Watani, Al Jalil playing Al Jazireh, and Al Orthodoxi meet Al Yarmouk.

Being the titleholders, the pressure this year is on Al Orthodoxi who won back the title they had won from 1976-1989 before losing it to Al Ahli in 1990 who won it again in 92, 93 and 94.

Al Orthodoxi seem poised for a repeat having their lineup complete, and led by veteran Hilal Barakat and Muntaser Abulayyeh. The team includes a mixture of both young experienced players



Al Ahli's Naser Bushnaq goes for a lay-up as teammates Walid Badran and Samir Murqus look on during the 1993 final (File photo)

alongside newcomers who are mostly under 20 led by Fadi Saqqa.

"We are happy to see the emergence of stronger teams making the championship more competitive. This is a very positive aspect," senior Orthodoxi basketball official Fadi Zureiqat Monday told the Jordan Times.

He said that his team had been training since April and had a successful training camp in Lebanon where they met top Lebanese and Egyptian teams losing two matches and winning one.

Zureiqat added that his club was happy that the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) had decided to hold the championship in a playoff form as that would allow for more matches — something local teams greatly lack.

"It is precisely for that reason that the top three teams have travelled to Syria and Lebanon for their final training camps — and even so, Jordanian teams are no less competitive if we have everything available like teams in neighbouring countries (like sponsorship and less stringent rules regarding player registration and free movement)."

Ahli head coach Ghaiith Najjar, missing the efforts of the team's top players this season, sounded less optimistic about his chances of regaining the title.

"We will be represented by a young lineup who

might lack the experience but are certainly a good asset for the future," he said.

Najjar, previously an assistant coach, will be leading the team as head coach for the first time hoping to prove that Al Ahli can do well without their well-known stars.

While declining to comment on recent rumours that star centre Naser Bushnaq will rejoin the team after a year's absence during which he joined a Qatari team, Najjar said former captain Samir Murqus would be joining his younger teammates also after missing last season when he announced his retirement and was assistant coach.

Walid Badran is back on the team and will play alongside teammates Ramez Hamoudieh, Mohammad Shamsi, Marwan Saeedi and Faisal Nsour.

Al Ahli had a training camp in Syria lately where they won one match beating Al Shurta 69-67 and losing 74-67 to Al Jeish and 76-52 to Syria's top team Al Wihdeh.

The third title contender — Al Jazireh — have a relatively complete lineup led by Yousef Abu Bakr, Saqr Khirfan and Naser Alawneh. However, the team will this year miss the efforts of playmaker Ghaiith Ennabi — one of the leading figures on the team.

According to head coach Fadi Sabbah, the team's latest training camp in Lebanon was very benefi-

cial where his young lineup met Beirut's top teams losing to Al Hikmah, Al Riyadi and Al Tadamoos and beating Al Wardieh by one point.

"We are happy that the form of the top teams is very close which will provide an interesting championship for all," said Sabbah. Like other teams, Al Jazireh are happy to have the playoff system finally implemented allowing players and fans more games and a serious challenge for the title.

The other teams seem unlikely to have any effect on the top standings.

Newcomers Al Yarmouk will be giving it their best to oust undermanned Al Watani and inconsistent Al Jalil a hard time in their fight for a place in the first division.

The first round is set to be completed by Dec. 1 — the day an all-star tournament starts for players of the women's national team who have been regrouped in preparation for the Asian Championship due to be held in Bangkok April 27.

The players have been divided into two teams and will play three matches on Dec. 1, 3, and 12 preceding the men's matches.

While players were regrouped over two weeks ago, the national team has been unable to start practice due to the unavailability of a basketball court — a fact that seriously hinders their training programme for the Asian Championship.

Italian boxer declared brain dead

PARMA (R) — Doctors declared a middleweight boxer Fabrizio De Chiara brain dead on Sunday after his collapse in the last round of his 12-round fight.

"To the course of the day the third round, the patient's condition worsened and we have ascertained that the functioning of his brain has ceased," 1-81, for the Italian national team, said a doctor at a hospital in the central Tuscan town of Pisa.

De Chiara, 25, collapsed at the end of his 12-round contest against Vincenzo Imparato in the western Italian town of Massa. After being operated for four hours, doctors declared him clinically dead (Reuters photo).

fighter's mother, Carla, told reporters, "I would rather not do that but I will respect his decision."

Imparato, who had fought De Chiara before many times as an amateur, said: "I could see my opponent was exhausted and gasping for breath, weakened by fatigue. I would rather have lost the fight and the title than undergo these awful hours for a friend. I could not sleep last night. I just kept thinking about De Chiara. I didn't want to win the title like this."

The tragedy looked certain to rekindle the debate over boxing.

"We have arrived at the last straw," said parliamentarian Massimo Mauro, a former professional soccer player. "If it were up to me I would ban boxing." He said he would ask a parliamentary committee to address ways to make the sport safer, if not ban it outright.



Italian middleweight boxer Fabrizio De Chiara, collapsed at the end of his 12-round contest against Vincenzo Imparato in the western Italian town of Massa. After being operated for four hours, doctors declared him clinically dead (Reuters photo)

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The Central Bank of Jordan Issues Commemorative Coins on the UN 50th Anniversary

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, the Central Bank of Jordan wishes to announce the issue of silver and base metal coins. These coins will be sold at the Central Bank as from Sunday 17.11.96. Following are their specifications:-

Denomination	Silver coin	Base metal coin
Alloy	5 Dinars Sterling .925 silver	5 Dinars Cupro - Nickel
Diameter	38.61 mm	38.61 mm
Weight	28.28 gm	28.28 gm
Shape	round	round
Edge	milled	milled
Price	JD 14.00	JD 5.00



Obverse: * The portrait of His Majesty King Hussein.
* The texts (Al-Hussein Bin Talal) and King of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Arabic.
* The text (The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) in English.

Reverse: * An engraving of the Black Iris.
* The emblem of the UN celebrations.
* The text (Black Iris: Jordan's national flower).
(1945-1995) to indicate the 50th anniversary of the UN.
* The denomination written in English.

The presentation cases of these coins include certificates of authenticity.

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Q.1 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AKQ74 OK542 OK9 463
The bidding has proceeded:
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1a Pass 20 Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.2 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AKQ1034 OK53 OK1010 48
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1a Pass 20 Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.3 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AKQ76 OK1094 OK5 44
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1a Pass 1NT Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AQJ885 778 OKKJ93 48
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1a Pass 20 Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.5 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AKKJ76 OK1094 OK5 44
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1a Pass 1NT Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
AKKJ76 OK105 OK4 OK94
The bidding has proceeded:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1a Pass 1NT Pass
What do you bid now?

Look for answers on Monday.

Jordan to seek advanced technology and equipment from U.S. under new status

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan will be seeking certain state-of-the-art military technology and equipment from the United States under a new privileged status given in the Kingdom by Washington, but it has not drawn up a list of its requirements, Information Minister Marwan Muasher said Monday.

The information minister also implied that Jordan would not be seeking any nuclear material from the U.S. although the non-North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ally status given to the Kingdom.

Dr. Muasher, addressing a weekly press briefing, said Jordan welcomed the U.S. move, "which opens the door for Jordan to receive certain state-of-the-art technology and equipment from the U.S."

Jordan can now receive some of the advanced equipment that U.S. military units bring in with them when they come here for joint exercises with Jordanian counterparts, he said. "This was not the case until now," he noted.

U.S. Air Force units which took part in joint exercises with the Royal Jordanian Air Force in mid-1996 had brought in with them advanced radar and control equipment related to F-16 fighter jets. They left behind part of the equipment and technology, but the entire lot could not be given to Jordan because the Kingdom did not enjoy any special status with the U.S.

Under the non-NATO ally status, Jordan is now entitled to "priority consideration" for military aid and equipment. The status, which falls under the Foreign Assistance Act of

1991, took effect on Nov. 12, 1996.

According to a State Department statement, the status "makes Jordan eligible for priority consideration for the transfer of excess defence articles, the use of already appropriated military assistance funds for procurement through commercial leases, the stockpiling of U.S. military material and the purchase of depleted uranium munitions."

Asked specifically about the clause on "depleted uranium ammunition," Dr. Muasher pointed out that such provisions were standard in granting non-NATO ally status.

"But it does not mean that Jordan would be asking for such items," he said. "We have not drawn up a list of equipment or technology that we would seek from the U.S."

The American move also permits Jordanian companies to bid on certain U.S. Department of Defence contracts. A non-NATO ally status will also allow for the positioning of American military equipment in the country.

"The designation of Jordan recognises its continued support for peace, and underscores its strong and growing relationship between Jordan and the United States," the U.S. State Department said.

Officials here have stressed that Jordan and the United States have not discussed the positioning of U.S. weapons in the country.

Other countries that have also been granted non-NATO ally status by the United States are Australia, Egypt, Israel, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Dr. Muasher also said Monday that Jordan would start receiving 16 F-16 fighter planes from the U.S. in December 1997.

Afghan rivals resume fighting

KABUL (R) — Opposing forces on the frontline north of Kabul were engaged in heavy exchanges of artillery and rocket fire on Monday after a lull of three days.

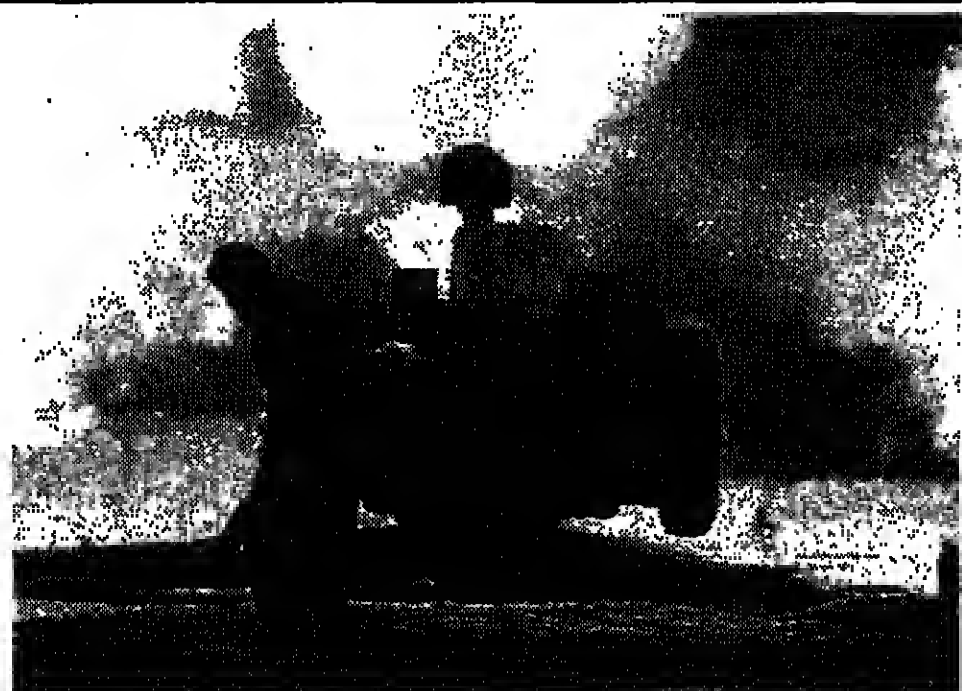
Forces loyal to the Taliban movement are facing fighters of the ousted government and their allies on a front in a valley 20 to 25 kilometres north of Kabul.

Taliban multiple rocket launchers and artillery were pounding a small village to the west of the so-called "New Road" 25 kilometres north of Kabul, apparently in an attempt to destroy a force of opposition fighters surrounded there.

The New Road runs along the eastern side of the valley towards the frontline.

A Taliban commander on the frontline told Reuters that former government forces launched two attacks, one at 11 p.m. (1830 GMT) on Sunday night and another at 10 a.m. (0530 GMT) on Monday morning.

"They attacked at 11 o'clock last night, and then again this morning," said the commander, who declined to give his name. "They were trying to cut the New Road."



An Afghan Taliban fighter fires artillery from a base 30 kilometres north of Kabul towards positions held by fighters loyal to the former government as fighting resumed in Afghanistan after a three-day lull (Reuters photo)

The opposition alliance forces have launched a number of attacks from the west in an attempt to cut the road, so far without success.

"We have taken 12 prisoners and sent them to Kabul," said the Taliban commander. It was not possible to verify his comments.

Witnesses said they saw a number of wounded Taliban being taken to hospital from the frontline. There were no reliable figures for the number of wounded and dead on either side of the battle.

The Taliban commander said no territory had changed hands, but it was not possible to check his comments.

As he spoke, two Taliban helicopter-gunships hovered overhead waiting to go into action.

The front line north of Kabul has seen some heavy engagements over the past month, but neither side has managed to make a strategic breakthrough.

The Taliban control a low range of hills running across the valley that the opposition must take if they are to launch an attack on Kabul itself.

Afghan watchers in Kabul say a stalemate has developed, with neither side able to inflict a significant defeat on the other.

Taliban-controlled radio in Kabul said on Sunday

night that their troops had repulsed an attack by forces of the northern leader General Abdul Rashid Dostum in the remote north-western provinces of Badkhis and Faryab.

Both sides have in the past claimed victories in the northwest, but they have not been independently verified.

The United Nations Refugee Agency says that thousands of people have been displaced by the northern fighting. In a news conference on Sunday afternoon the Taliban acting minister of information appealed to the international community to provide food and shelter for the refugees.

Petra to host 'informal' meeting of refugee working group next week

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — An "informal" two-day meeting of the multilateral working group on refugees will be held in Petra next week, in the attempt to "break the ice" and reactivate discussions on one of the thorniest issues in the Mideast peace process, officials said.

Members and heads of the delegations scheduled to take part in the Nov. 24-25 meeting said they do not expect concrete results to be achieved. However, they said, the meeting, the first of its kind since the election of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in May, will provide all parties with an opportunity to resume contacts.

Three-member delegations representing Jordan, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Egypt and Israel, as well as the U.S. and Russia (the co-sponsors of the peace process) and Canada (which chairs the working group on refugees) will take part in the meeting.

According to government and diplomatic sources, the Palestinian delegation will be headed by Assad Abdul Rahman, a member of the PNA cabinet and head of the Palestinian delegation at the multilateral talks.

Yusef Hadas, former director general of the Israeli foreign ministry and head of Israeli delegation to the working group on refugees in the multilateral track, will lead his country's

delegation.

"The meeting is aimed at monitoring the work of the sub-committees of the working group on refugees and evaluating the progress achieved so far," an Israeli embassy spokesperson told the Jordan Times.

The working group on refugees, set up in Moscow in early 1992 following the launching of an Arab-Israeli peace talks in Madrid in September 1991, is one of the five working groups in the multilateral phase of the Mideast peace process.

Other working groups deal with water, the environment, regional economic development and arms control.

Negotiators agree that, of the five working groups, the one on refugees is the one which has achieved the least so far.

Next week's meeting at the Movenpick Hotel in Petra represents an attempt to "break the ice," a Palestinian official said, adding that the meeting was meant to be "held discreetly, to avoid press-amplified reproaches and recriminations."

Director General of the Department for Palestinian Affairs of the Jordanian Foreign Ministry Abdul Karim Abul Hajja said: "The refugee problem not only touches the lives of more than four million people who have been deprived of their homes for 50 years. It concerns the whole region and on its solution depends the future of the peace process."

Accusing Israel of "refus-

ing to discuss the political aspects of the problem, relegating them to the final status of negotiations," Dr. Abul Hajja said: "The Palestinians should have their right to return recognised, even if many of them, having built their lives and invested abroad, could choose not to exercise that right."

Complicating an already excruciating problem even further, the definition of "refugees" and "displaced persons" has emerged as one of the most sticking points in the Arab-Israeli talks.

"While all the Arab parties agree on considering as 'displaced' all Palestinians driven from their homes in 1967 along with their wives and children born afterwards as well as their relatives who were not in the territories at that point in time, Israel refuses to include relatives in the counting of displaced," Dr. Abdul Rahman explained.

According to Israel's stand, the children of a Palestinian from Hebron, for example, who were studying in Beirut at the time of the 1967 war, are not entitled to the status of "displaced," as they are not considered as having been directly and personally affected by the war, Dr. Abdul Rahman said.

Though both Arabs and Israelis consider as "refugees" those who fled their homes or were driven out in the aftermath of the 1948 war, which resulted

(Continued on page 7)

Europarlament chief urges Israel to honour agreements

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The president of the European Parliament told Israel's legislature on Monday the Jewish state must surmount historic enmities and honour peace deals with the Palestinians.

"I am deeply moved, but also not without a sense of shame that this honour and this trust is conferred on a German," Mr. Klaus Hansch opened his remarks to Israel's Knesset.

Declaring Europe's support for Israel to be "unswerving," Mr. Hansch urged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's rightist government to implement interim peace accords signed by the previous administration.

"The international community expects that those agreements be honoured... international commitments your state has made are not affected by a change in majorities," Mr. Hansch said.

"It is the living proof that in Europe the enmities of

the past have been overcome, not through forgetting the bitter lessons of past conflict, but through understanding them and learning from them," he told parliament, saying Israelis and Arabs could emulate Europe's example.

Israeli-Palestinian talks on a long-delayed redeployment in Hebron agreed by the former government are stalemated over Mr. Netanyahu's insistence the signed deal be altered.

"The future of Hebron was settled by the Oslo agreements," Mr. Hansch said.

Mr. Hansch said the presence of some 130,000 Jewish settlers amidst more than two million Palestinians in occupied Arab lands posed a "human problem that must be addressed."

No one, he said, would benefit if Israel followed the "dead-end street of more illegal settlements."

Citing Europe's role as the largest provider of economic assistance to the

Palestinians, Mr. Hansch urged Israel to ease its crippling economic closure of Palestinian self-rule areas.

"The path to prosperity for the Palestinians requires open borders."

He said Israel's closure of the areas, meant to prevent suicide bombers from infiltrating the Jewish state, was only a "short-term security measure" and "unfettered economic investment" would help cement peace.

The EU is a main source of financial support for the Palestinian autonomy, pledging more than \$650 million in aid by 1998. The Europeans have also backed the Palestinian goal of statehood — placing them at odds with Israel's new government.

"It is not a secret that we do not always see eye-to-eye," said Knesset speaker Dan Tichon, calling on Mr. Hansch to show a "balanced and responsible approach" on the Middle East.

Netanyahu calls on Arab leaders to drop talk of war

TEL AVIV (AP) — Facing growing criticism from Israel's neighbours, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday urged Egypt and the other Arab states to drop their tough statements and focus on peacemaking instead.

"I recommend that we concentrate on the positive side instead of raising all sorts of hypothetical possibilities of deterioration into war. I am not in favour of threats," Mr. Netanyahu told reporters. "Certainly everyone knows that Israel aspires to peace."

Mr. Netanyahu's comments came after Israeli media quoted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak as saying that Egypt would not sit by idly if war broke out between Israel and Syria. The Israeli daily Haaretz said Egypt had promised Syria a "diplomatic security net" in the event of war with Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu maintained Monday that "in recent weeks there has been a trend towards moderation of tension between Israel and Syria" and predicted that the peace talks would resume at the start of the new year.

Recent comments by Mr. Mubarak and other Arab leaders, however, indicate they are losing patience with Israeli foot-dragging — such as the continuing postponement of Israel's promised troop pullout from the West Bank town of Hebron.

Last week, Mr. Mubarak told the Financial Times that Israel's relations with Jordan and Egypt had deteriorated to a point where "the Arabs are not going to trust any agreement with Israel."

"With the present situation of mistrust and suspicion it will be very difficult even to deal on a govern-

ment-to-government level," the Egyptian leader told the paper.

Syria's government-controlled press said Israel's renewed threats against Syria should be taken seriously and urged Arab states to be on high alert.

The comments came a day after Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai accused Syria of making chemical weapons.

The government daily Al Baath said Mr. Mordechai's threats seemed to signal "that the provocative Israeli policies have gone beyond mere talk to a very advanced stage of a possible implementation."

It said the comments should be "seriously taken into consideration by all Arab states, which should be vigilant and on high alert, because any aggression on Syria is an assault on all Arabs."



Imran Khan gets a boy

LONDON (AFP) — Jemima Khan, wife of former Pakistan cricket hero Imran Khan, gave birth to a healthy boy on Sunday at the Portland Hospital, London, a spokesman for the family said. Imran Khan and Jemima's mother, Annabel Goldsmith, wife of the billionaire financier and politician James Goldsmith, were present at the birth of the 3.15-kilogramme baby. "It was a healthy pregnancy and birth, it was totally normal in every respect. The family are delighted," said a family spokesman.

Moore, Dalton and Brosnan remember Broccoli

LONDON (AP) — Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton and Pierce Brosnan were on hand Sunday for a posthumous homage to Albert "Chubby" Broccoli, the U.S. producer who brought Ian Fleming's super spy James Bond to the silver screen. Broccoli produced 17 Bond pictures and more than 30 other films, including the musical "Chitty Chitty BangBang." He died in June at 87 and was honoured at the Odeon Cinema in Leicester Square. Two other actors have played the suave, sexy agent 007 — Sean Connery, who began it all, and George Lazenby, who played the Bond role only once, in 1969, "On Her Majesty's Secret Service."

Fergie says lover hit her

LONDON (AP) — Piling on revelations, the Duchess of York said in a newspaper interview Sunday that former lover John Bryan hit her and tore up her diary. "Nanny (of her daughters) used to sit outside sometimes on the stairs and be frightened by all the screaming," the former Sarah Ferguson was quoted as saying in a London weekly, the Independent on Sunday. The interview was the latest in a round of public soul-baring, mostly on U.S. television last week, that has brought Fergie's poor image in Britain to a new low. "Bryan" tore up my diary and threw it around the room," said Fergie, describing a scene in March 1995. "I wouldn't let him look at it. He hit me. I had bruises all down my arms because I held them up to defend myself. I don't think any woman in the world likes to be hit and I certainly don't." The duchess, who is heavily in debt, and Prince Andrew, the queen's second son, divorced in May after 10 years of marriage. She has published a book telling her own story.

Alberto Agnelli weds

MONTEPOLI (AP) — Giovanni Alberto Agnelli, heir apparent to the Fiat industrial giant, wed Avery Frances Howe in a small ceremony inside the chapel in the family's 16th century Tuscan villa near Pisa. About 30 people, including family Patriarch Giovanni Agnelli, attended Saturday's wedding, performed by Pisa Archbishop Alessandro Pionti. A score of private guards and paramilitary police kept photographers and onlookers from approaching the grounds. Ms. Howe, 31, an architect who has American and British citizenship, met Mr. Agnelli, 32, while they were undergraduates at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. A spokesman said honeymoon plans were still up in the air.

Israeli supreme court allows sleep deprivation

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's supreme court on Sunday authorised the internal security agency Shin Bet to deprive a Palestinian prisoner of sleep in attempt to get information from him on alleged preparations for extremist attacks.

The court allowed Shin Bet interrogators to keep Khader Mubarak, said to be a member of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), awake and his head in a sack, court officials said.

The interrogators, for their part, promised not to further tighten the prisoner's handcuffs or keep him in a painful position.

Mr. Mubarak, arrested last month, is accused of being a member of an armed Hamas branch that was planning attacks in Israel. He appealed to the supreme court last week to end the severe measures used in his interrogation.

The court was accused by an Israeli human rights association on Friday of giving free rein to Shin Bet to torture its Palestinian prisoners by allowing "heightened

physical pressure."

The supreme court on Thursday gave Shin Bet permission to use such pressure to interrogate a Palestinian prisoner suspected of planning extremist attacks.

The court said it had been convinced that the prisoner, Mohammad Adel Aziz Hamdan, held crucial information which would enable future disasters to be avoided.

The court said Mr. Hamdan's interrogators should not use methods that were against the law, but imposed no particular restrictions otherwise.

Israeli law allows for "moderate physical pressure" in questioning Palestinians and "heightened physical pressure" when the prisoner is suspected of having information on a possible attack.

Israeli security services have feared for some weeks that a new attack was imminent in revenge for the assassination in Malta of Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shigagi, presumably by Israeli agents, in October last year.

Peres denies he advised Arafat to stall on Hebron

TEL AVIV (AP) — By the end of the day, it was hard to see who was manipulating whom in Israel's latest political scandal involving the prime minister, the opposition leader and 10 rabbis.

It began Monday morning with a front-page story in the Yediot Achronot daily.

Veteran journalist Shimon Shifter quoted people close to the prime minister as saying they had classified material showing that opposition leader Shimon Peres advised Yasser Arafat not to hurry to sign a deal on the West Bank town of Hebron.

Mr. Peres told the Palestinian leader that Benjamin Netanyahu was not trustworthy, and that it was best to get everything in writing and in detail from the new Israeli prime minister, Mr. Shifter wrote.

Mr. Netanyahu denied he had such material. Arafat's spokesman denied Mr. Peres had counselled the Palestinian leader to be careful and slow down the

talks. And an angry Peres said he was the victim of political slander and compared himself to Alfred Dreyfus, the French army officer who was falsely accused of treason, convicted and later exonerated.

"This is an unprecedented scandal, like Dreyfus in France," Mr. Peres told Israel radio in a telephone interview from Sweden where he was attending a seminar.

"Someone who calls himself a senior (cabinet) minister, and is a coward, a scoundrel and a liar, grabs a journalist, tells him a story under anonymity. The journalist protects him," Mr. Peres said.

Members of Mr. Peres' Labour Party accused Mr. Netanyahu's associates of spreading false claims to blacken Mr. Peres' name. "If it didn't come out of his (Netanyahu's) immediate circle, it came from very legitimate circles around the prime minister," said

(Continued on page 7)

London plays do

LONDON (AFP) — The Foreign Office has received waves of criticism from the House of Commons for its handling of the situation in the Middle East. The Foreign Office has been accused of being too cautious in its approach to the conflict. The House of Commons has called for a more aggressive stance. The Foreign Office has defended its position, saying it is working to achieve a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Volume 21 Number 6



King of Jordan will p Kingdom wil

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan, on Tuesday, opened the 20th Parliament with a speech from the Throne. The King's speech was a landmark moment in Jordan's history, as it marked the first time a monarch had addressed the parliament since its founding in 1952. The King's speech was a landmark moment in Jordan's history, as it marked the first time a monarch had addressed the parliament since its founding in 1952.

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